

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIII, Issue No. 352

THURSDAY DECEMBER 18, 2003

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

I N S I D E

Around the CNMI



tribune subscription

Campus club highlights Marianas culture

Front, left to right, Tara White, Secretary; Januaria Balajadia, President; & Malia Matanane, Treasurer. Back, left to right, Raymond Camacho, Sgt.-at-Arms; Roger Igisomar, Vice President; and Anselmo Celis, Publicity Officer/Historian.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Adriano to form conference committee

By MARIAN A. MARAYA
REPORTER

Senate President Joaquin G. Adriano is poised to direct his committee on Fiscal Affairs to confer with its House counterpart following the rejection of the Senate’s amendment on the \$1.86-million classrooms funding measure, House Bill 14-62.

The House on Thursday junked the Senate’s proposal to add the word “reprogramming” in one portion of the bill. Speaker Benigno R. Fitial instructed his committee on Ways and Means to resolve the issue with the upper chamber.

“The amendment we did was upon the request of the commissioner of education. PSS asked that we include the term ‘repro-

gramming’ in there so that other Saipan schools can be fixed up,” explained the presiding officer yesterday.

He noted that it was Minority Leader Pete P. Reyes who offered the amendment during a Senate session held Wednesday.

“I am ready to set up a conference committee and have them work out the differences in the wording,” said the Tinian senator.

HB 14-62, authored by House Rep. Ramon Tebuteb, was crafted mainly to alleviate overcrowding in Kagman public schools.

The bill, divides the \$1.86 million among the following projects: \$692,220 for additional classrooms at Kagman Elementary School; \$620,405 for more classrooms at Kagman

High School; \$147,375 for the CNMI’s share under the DHHS Administration for Children and Families Assistance Award for the construction of the Garapan Headstart Center; \$200,000 for more Tinian Headstart Center classrooms; and \$200,000 for more Rota Headstart Center classrooms.

Earlier, the bill encountered resistance mainly from minority member Rep. Arnold I. Palacios, who objected to the removal of \$700,000 from Garapan Elementary School, amid the school’s need for additional classrooms.

Palacios, of Precinct 3, was the sole dissenting vote in the passage of HB 14-62.

Proponents of the bill justified the distribution of funds accord-

ing to immediate priorities laid out by the Public School System.

Education Committee Chairman Justo S. Quitugua had explained that the distribution of funds was mainly to alleviate overcrowding in Kagman Elementary School and Kagman High School, according to the priorities cited by PSS.

The Committee on Ways and Means endorsed the passage of HB 14-62, stating that there is a dire need to increase the capacity of PSS classrooms in both schools as student enrollment continues to increase.

The Chaminade University in Honolulu, Hawaii will get a taste of the Marianas for one whole week beginning today, with the Marianas Club hosting the first-ever Marianas Week from March 14-18.

Club officials said that, for one whole week, the club will share the culture and traditions of the Mariana Islands to the general campus community through various spiritual, educational, and social events.

The club said that it plans to make the event an annual celebration.

Starting today, March 14, the club will sponsor the 7:30pm mass at the Mystical Rose Oratory. UD Ebony Heritage Singers will also sing the opening and closing songs at the Marianas service.

on the day of the event \$6.50.

The Marianas Club’s officials are Januaria Balajadia, president; Roger Igisomar, vice president; Tara White, secretary; Malia Matanane, treasurer; Raymond Camacho, sergeant-at-arms; and Anselmo Celis, publicity officer/historian. They can be contacted at marianasclub@yahoo.com for further information.

Camacho’s parents, Rosiky and Winnie Camacho, expressed themselves proud over the accomplishments and activities of not just their son but of all these children from the Marianas who are actively doing something to promote the local culture.

“We are so thrilled that our students are out there promoting our islands. We are proud to have them represent our islands,” said Winnie.

GCA to mark Spirit Week celebration

The Grace Christian Academy will be celebrating its Spirit Week from March 15 to 19, with a list of the activities that are already lined up for the week.

On Monday, March 15, the theme will be Island Day and will feature:

- Forensic Competitions/Geography Bee—8am-12 noon
- Math Olympiads—1pm-

3:15pm. Both activities will involve elementary and high school students.

On Tuesday, March 16, the theme will be Wacko Day and will feature:

- Science Fair, involving students from kindergarten to high school. This will be a whole-day affair with presentations from government agencies.

Wednesday, March 17, will be Class Spirit Day, featuring a pep rally from 8am to 12 noon. There will be games in the afternoon.

Friday, March 19, will feature a Go Go Jonah Production at 6pm.

Saturday, March 20, will also feature the Go Go Jonah Production at the same time, 6pm.

Drivers told to watch out for athletes

The 2004 Tagaman and Exterra events is scheduled to take place in April of this year. There will be athletes practicing for these events on the highways and bi-ways of Saipan.

The Department of Public Safety is asking for people’s cooperation with regards to the safety of the participants. It urged commuters to

drive cautiously on the highway and watch out for the bicyclists who have started their training.

“In addition, boaters are asked to be extra careful out in the water and to watch out for swimmers,” said DPS in a statement.

As a reminder, a portion of the main roads will be closed on April 16 and 17 and April 24

and 25, 2004 to accommodate these events. More information will be made available to the public in the coming days.

Once again, the public is asked to drive or boat with utmost caution.

For more information, contact Rose Ada, Traffic PIO, at the Department of Public Safety’s Traffic Section at number 664-9084-5.

cars

mcdo

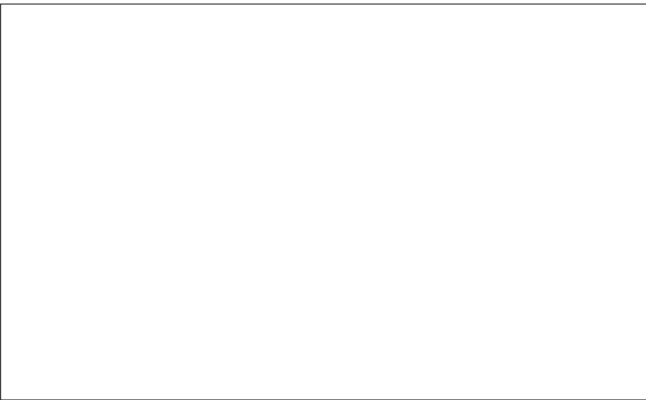
Norita seeks info on deployed NMI servicemen

Rep. Clyde K. Norita’s office is inviting family members of deployed U.S. servicemen to submit names and photographs of loved ones who have served, or are currently serving, in “hot spots” such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Haiti.

Norita, who chairs the House Committee on Federal and Foreign Relations, is seeking the information in order to officially “recognize and honor all sailors, soldiers and airmen, whether active or reserve, who have voluntarily put themselves in harm’s way for the protection of the nation.”


All information should be referred to Frank G. Cepeda, the governor’s special assistant for military and veteran affairs, who is coordinating the project with Norita’s office. Cepeda can be reached at 664-2650.

WEATHER FORECAST




PICTURE TIME: 2:25 A.M., DECEMBER 17, 2003
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.


A monsoon trough extends from 6N130E through a tropical disturbance near 8N145E and finally to near 5N160E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the disturbance are found in the Mariana islands as well as between Yap and Chuuk or between 4N and 16N from 139E to 153E. Just east of the monsoon trough, a surface trough of low pressure continues to near the equator at 168E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are developing north and east of the trough or within 100 miles either side of a line from 9N160E to the equator at 173E, including Kosrae. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across portions of the Marshall islands, between 4N and 16N from 170E to 180.




SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.
Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.




GUAM AND ROTA
Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.
Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.




PALAU
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.




POHNPEI
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10 kt.




YAP AND ULITHI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.






















KOSRAE
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Southeast at 10 kt.



CHUUK
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers with a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.



MAJURO
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Cloudy	61F (16C)	49F (9C)
 Beijing	Sunny	44F (7C)	26F (-3C)
 Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	86F (30C)	72F (22C)
 London, England	Cloudy	56F (13C)	45F (7C)
 Los Angeles	Cloudy	69F (21C)	51F (11C)
 Manila	Cloudy	88F (31C)	71F (22C)
 Melbourne	Sunny	73F (23C)	54F (12C)
 Miami	Partly Cloudy	84F (29C)	75F (24C)
 New York, NY	Cloudy	52F (11C)	48F (9C)
 Osaka	Rain	54F (12C)	46F (8C)
 Paris	Cloudy	53F (12C)	41F (5C)
 Pusan	Rain	58F (14C)	43F (6C)
 Rome	Partly Cloudy	55F (13C)	39F (4C)
 Salem, Oregon	Rain	54F (12C)	38F (3C)
 San Francisco	Sunny	64F (18C)	47F (5C)
 Seoul	Rain	52F (11C)	45F (7C)
 Tokyo	Rain	55F (13C)	49F (9C)
 Washington, DC	Cloudy	60F (16C)	48F (9C)

Guerrero: Yangetmai has the right to question Teacher Rep poll result

Board of Education member Herman Guerrero commented yesterday that Marianas High School teacher James Yangetmai has the prerogative to question the results of the recently concluded Teacher Representative election, which the Association of Commonwealth Teacher candidate lost to Kagman High School teacher Ambrose Ben-



Guerrero

nett. “Anyone [who] is running can always question [the election result]. I think they [administration] need to ensure whether he has valid points or not. If it’s not valid, then at least you settle the issue. And there’s no cloud hanging over the whole process. “It’s a democratic process. People who lose sometimes ask or think there are discrepancies or procedures [that were] not followed. If that is the case then the people that are conducting the election needs to refute them and say that this is what we did, and this the process and the procedures,” said the official, who recently lost the BOE chairmanship to Roman Benavente. Yangetmai, who lagged behind Bennett by 16 votes in Monday’s poll, hinted of possible vote manipulation, casting

doubts on the election’s credibility. ACT claimed the process was not valid and fair, as it allegedly lacked transparency. The group raised the absence of its own representative at the polling center. “I guess in any election, there’s a need to be clear on the process and procedures. If the one who lost is questioning the validity of the election then perhaps they need to revisit [the issue] and make sure there’s no doubt that what they certified is true and correct. The process has to be followed and it has to be transparent so nobody can question it,” insisted Guerrero, who called on House legislators yesterday. The BOE member representing Saipan was also curious over the dismal turnout in Monday’s election.

“When you only have 28 percent [of] eligible voters voting, that’s an extremely low turnout. With this kind of turnout, there’s no clear mandate from the teachers. So it’s questionable. One can raise the question why you don’t have many who voted? There’s a lot of questions why,” he asserted.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta proclaimed Bennett’s victory on Tuesday, a day after the Teacher Representative poll was held here Monday and simultaneously on Rota and Tinian. The chief executive stressed that teacher representation in the BOE is constitutionally mandated. He said that concerns raised over the selection has prompted his office to hold the election so that all public school teachers in the CNMI could choose a representative that would truly represent them. Babauta credited the Public School System, the BOE, the

PSS legal counsel, the Attorney General’s Office and the administration for putting together a fair and objective selection process. Of the 500 full-time teachers who were eligible to vote, Babauta confirmed that only 142 teachers or 28 percent cast their votes. He lamented the minimal participation. According to the breakdown, Yangetmai garnered 62 votes while Bennett gained 78 votes. Two ballots were reportedly cast without votes. Babauta explained that only full time teachers were eligible to vote in this election, quoting PSS’ definition of full time teachers as any person who is employed by the Public School System and has the primary responsibility for the education, instruction or provides related services for one or more students. *(Marian A. Maraya)*

Paras signs payment schedule with CHC

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Paras Enterprises president Juan T. Guerrero has signed a payment schedule agreement with the Department of Public Health only last week. Earlier, Paras legal counsel Mark Smith clarified that no agreement had been reached yet as of Jan. 8 as previously agreed by both parties. Guerrero said yesterday that Paras signed the payment schedule only last Jan. 14. On January 16, he said Paras received an additional \$100,000 payment from DPH. Based on the schedule, the department will give another payment of \$80,000 to Paras on Jan. 30 and some \$50,000 on Feb. 13. Guerrero said Paras and DPH continue to negotiate for the \$50,000 billing. “We have submitted our billing for \$50,000. I don’t know why they’re disputing our billing now when in the last six years,

they never did,” said Guerrero. He said Paras submitted \$248,000 billing to DPH as of Jan. 7, 2004. Based on the schedule, the DPH only acknowledged some \$230,000. “There is some flexibility but we’ll still pursue what is really due us,” said Guerrero, adding that the department itself is charging Paras some \$11,000 for outstanding hospital bills. This amount would be assessed against the last payment to Paras. “We’ll settle that but I’m not really sure how much we owe them so we have to discuss that,” he said. Guerrero also clarified that he has not signed any expiration transfer agreement with the department, which would “legalize” the transfer of Paras employees to the Commonwealth Health Center. Some authorities, however, said that a consensual transfer agreement with Paras is no longer need-

ed since its contracts with employees provide that their termination of employment goes with Paras’ contract termination with CHC. Both parties have agreed to finalize their payment schedule in view of the DPH’ shift to direct hiring of nursing staff effective Jan. 1, 2004. Paras and other agencies’ contracts with CHC ended on Dec, 31, 2003 but transfer negotiations dragged along pending the settlement of the government’s debt with the companies and the lack of funded FTEs or positions at the department. On Jan. 2, Finance released \$100,000 each to Paras and Saipan Employment Agency Services as partial payment. The government terminated its contracts with agencies on the belief that direct hiring would result in better delivery of health care and boost employee morale. The direct hiring aims to implement a uniform pay for all nursing staff.

DEQ heightens illegal dumping campaign

The Division of Environmental Quality warned that it would impose a fine on anyone caught illegally dumping trash on the islands. DEQ director John I. Castro Jr. urged the public to respect the no littering signs the agency has installed at beach parks and other areas. “We will assess a fine. Our regulations allow us to impose up to \$25,000 per day of violation,” Castro said. The DEQ hopes that the move will deter the public from illegally disposing of trash and household wastes. Castro said trash should be disposed of at the Lower Base

Refuse Transfer Station or the Marpi landfill. “Help us. It’s not just the DEQ’s job to keep Saipan beautiful but it’s also the public’s responsibility,” Castro added. The Environmental Interagency Cleanup Operation Team, of which DEQ is a member, and volunteers from non-profit group MOVER recently conducted an emergency cleanup in Garapan’s Makaka beach site, which had deteriorated due to illegal dumping. According to EICOT chairman Benny Pangelinan, people just ignored the DEQ’s no-littering sign at the site. *(John Ravelo)*

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Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XIV, Issue No. 74

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

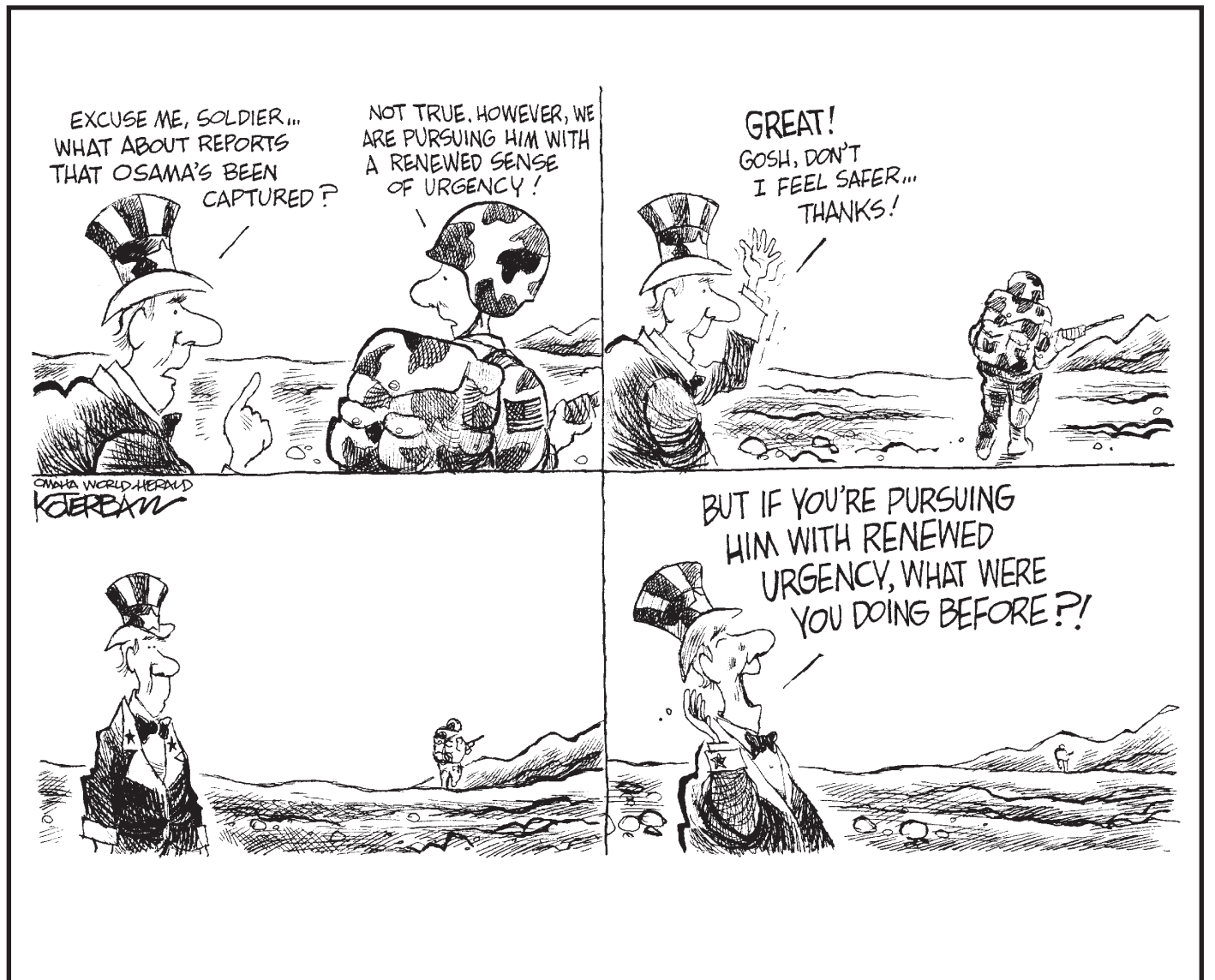
3/11

The Bush administration's clumsy diplomacy and its critics' hyperbolic charges of "unilateralism" sometimes obscure the fact that the United States has had true and valuable allies in the war on terrorism. Thursday one of the best of those, Spain, suffered a blow as shocking and as terrible as any the enemy has landed since Sept. 11, 2001. Authorities said that more than 190 people were killed and more than 1,200 injured when 10 backpacks crammed with compressed dynamite exploded on four trains in Madrid at the height of the morning rush hour. It remained unclear Thursday night who was responsible; police initially blamed the Basque ETA organization but later discovered evidence pointing to al-Qaida. Either way, as Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar put it, "March 11, 2004, has taken its place in the history of infamy."

Aznar, who is to leave office after an election scheduled for Sunday, has done as much as any foreign leader to support President Bush's consecutive campaigns against al-Qaida and Saddam Hussein during the past two years. Toughened by Spain's long fight against ETA, the Spanish leader understood better than most European leaders the threat posed by terrorists to modern democracies. Spain was instrumental in locating and capturing al-Qaida operatives, including several on its territory. And Spanish troops joined U.S. forces in Iraq last year as Aznar grittily joined with Britain's Tony Blair in standing by Bush, despite the opposition of most of the Spanish public. His strong leadership paid off: Though Spanish troops have suffered painful casualties, Aznar's party was favored to win the upcoming elections over an opposition that favored withdrawing from Iraq.

The terrorists who struck Thursday, whether from ETA or al-Qaida, no doubt hoped to punish Aznar for his firmness and persuade Spaniards to abandon his policies. "This is part of settling old accounts with Spain, the crusader, and America's ally in its war against Islam," said a purported al-Qaida statement received by an Arabic newspaper. But the early signs were that the crime would rally support across Europe for Spain, and for resoluteness in an ongoing war. "Democracies must be—and will be—united in combating this without weakness," said French President Jacques Chirac. The horror of Madrid only confirms that a broad and determined alliance is the only answer to terrorism. It reminds us that the United States neither fights, nor suffers, alone.

(c) 2004, The Washington Post



Parents work so teens can spend

By **JERRY ZEZIMA**
Special to The Stamford Advocate

As a man with two daughters who made it through their teenage years without, miraculously, bankrupting their mother and me, although there was rarely enough cash left over to blow on extravagant luxuries such as food and shelter, I have often said that when your children selfishly insist on eating every day, money comes in handy.

Now I know why. According to a story in the Journal of Neuroscience, there is a significant difference in the developing teenage brain and the mature brain of an adult when faced with the opportunity to make money.

Scientists found that as adults worked to make money in a research task, they experienced an increase in blood flow in the nucleus accumbens, a region deep in the middle of the brain. In contrast, adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17 who performed the same research task had half the blood flow and volume in this region. "It tells us that teenagers love stuff, but aren't as willing to get off the couch to get it as adults are," said James Bjork, one of the scientists who conducted the study.

I don't want to disparage the scientists or minimize their research, but any parent who now has or has ever had a teenager could have told them that.

Besides, I don't think this study gives teens enough credit for having the brainpower to obtain the money they need for the stuff they love.

In fact, I'll go even further and say that it's the teenagers who are enterprising and the adults who are lazy.

Using my own seven-year research (my daughters, who are 23 and 21, were in the five-year range of 12-17, with two additional years to account for the age difference), I can say unequivocally that the increased blood flow in the nucleus accumbens region of the adult brain occurs as the result of constant demands by teenagers for money, leading to a common medical condition in parents known as high blood pressure.

This has a profound effect on the thought processes of parents, who are eventually rendered helpless, and therefore lazy, in the face of such relentless assaults. The fol-

lowing typical conversation serves as an example.

Mother (standing in the kitchen): Your daughter wanted 50 bucks yesterday to get her hair cut.

Father: My daughter? She's yours, too. Maybe that's why she hit me up for 30 bucks so she could go to the mall.

Mother: You're too easy.

Father: Me? You're the one who got her into the shopping habit.

Mother: It's about time we put our feet down.

Father: You're right. This kid must think we're made of money.

Mother: From now on, we have to learn how to say no.

Teenager (yelling from the couch): I need a new backpack to carry my books or I'm gonna flunk out of school.

Mother (rushing into the family room): Sure, honey.

Father (taking out his wallet): How much do you need?

In fairness to teens, they can't get jobs until they turn 16, which is why I tried for so many years, starting when my kids were in elementary school, to get the child labor laws repealed. Now it's too late. Besides, even if teenagers do get jobs, they need transportation, which means: (a) you have to buy them a car or (b) they have to use yours. Either way, with gas and insurance costs, you're out even more money.

Eventually, teenagers get off the couch so they can go places to spend the money their parents have given them. The parents, in turn, get older and more tired from working so hard to make the money their teenagers need. This is why parents spend an increasing amount of time on the couch, where they usually fall asleep each night and miss not only the 11 o'clock news, but also their teenagers, who have come in late and can't get up in the morning and spend a large portion of their precious little time at home on the couch, thus leading their parents to believe, wrongly, that teenagers are lazy.

I guess those scientists don't have kids.

And now, to the parents of teenagers, I will report the final and most important part of my research: If you think your money supply is low and your blood pressure is high now, just wait until they go to college.

Zezima will write this column until he can afford to stop.

Fresh air for stale structures

By **EDWARD MAZRIA**

Special to the Los Angeles Times

In our quest to dramatically cut greenhouse gas emissions and lessen our dependence on fossil fuels, we have contented ourselves by pointing a finger at gas-guzzling sport utility vehicles. And in doing so we have overlooked the biggest source of emissions and energy consumption both in this country and around the globe: architecture.

If you took all sport utility vehicles off the road tomorrow and replaced them with hybrids, the effect on energy use and global warming would be minimal. The entire fleet of SUVs, minivans and light-duty trucks in this country accounts for only 6.5 percent of the total U.S. energy consumed each year, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. And although that doesn't mean we should abandon efforts to produce more efficient, environmentally friendly SUVs, it does illustrate a huge blind spot in U.S. energy consciousness.

Buildings and their construction account for nearly half of all the greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumed in this country each year. Globally, the percentage is even greater. And architects hold the key to turning down the global thermostat.

The reason for this is quite simple. Although our country's fleet of autos and light trucks could turn over within about 12 years and be replaced by more efficiently run vehicles, buildings have a lifespan (and energy consumption and emissions pattern) of 50 to 100 years.

The problem is that buildings consume energy mainly in the form of burning oil, natural gas and coal, and U.S. oil and gas production has been in decline since the 1970s. Global oil and natural gas reserves are limited; most of these remaining reserves are in a small area stretching from Saudi Arabia to Siberia, an unstable part of the world. This leaves coal. The United States, Russia, China, Australia and India have plenty of it, and it is cheap—and dirty. Clean coal technologies are decades away—as is capturing and storing carbon dioxide—and they are costly.

Architects know that buildings can be designed to require less than half the energy of today's average U.S. building, with no additional cost. This is accomplished through proper siting, building form, material selection and glass properties and location and by incorporating day-lighting strategies and natural heating, cooling and ventilation.

To achieve such a reduction, government at all levels must pass laws that all major governmental building renovation and new building projects be designed to use half the energy now typically consumed. When these standards are in widespread use, building codes for all housing developments and commercial, institutional and multifamily buildings can be changed to the standard in place for government buildings.

With about 5 billion square feet of new construction and 5 billion square feet of renovation taking place in the United States each year, the potential for reducing energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions is enormous. This would put the United States well on its way toward meeting its international obligations and demonstrate a way for developing nations to cut emissions without sacrificing economic growth.

There is no short-term or long-term greenhouse gas solution possible without involving the architectural and building communities. With abrupt rather than gradual climate change looming as a possibility, quickly engaging this sector becomes critical.

Mazria is an architect in Santa Fe, N.M. He is author of "The Passive Solar Energy Book" (Rodale



The importance of recording history, of writing and publishing first-hand accounts of historical events as—or shortly after—they occur is exemplified by the book "An Honorable Accord," written by Howard Willens and Deanne Siemer. The "Honorable Accord" of the title is the CNMI's Covenant, and the book records, in a fair amount of detail, the debate, discussions, maneuvers, manipulations, conflicts and compromises that were involved in creating the document that defines the relationship between the CNMI and the U.S.

One of the issues addressed in the book is representation of the new Commonwealth in Washington, D.C. The Covenant provides for a "representative" to the U.S. rather than the non-voting delegate to the U.S. Congress that all of the other insular entities have.

Some people appear to believe that the position of an elected Washington Representative was deliberately chosen by the CNMI to distinguish it from the other entities. The Washington Rep was a distinctive feature—somewhat like an ambassador, with both submitting their credentials to the State Department—that emphasized the uniqueness of the CNMI's relationship to the U.S. Giving up that distinction would be harmful, according to their beliefs, since it would result in the CNMI looking more like all the rest of the entities. It is, I confess, a belief that I also have held.

A reading of Willens and Siemer's book, however, reveals that such was not the case. The desire for a non-voting delegate was there from the very beginning. Even sharing Guam's delegate was discussed. But the U.S. was adamant. The decision to afford the CNMI representation by an "agent" (rather than a commissioner) was, in fact, a compromise, not the CNMI preference.

If it weren't for recorded history, the truth of the matter might have remained in question. But with the testimony offered by Willens' book, there can be no doubt. The desire for a non-voting delegate to the U.S. Congress, as present Washington Rep Pete A. Tenorio keeps insisting, has been there from the very beginning.

Speaking of negotiations with the powers-that-be in Washington, D.C., isn't it interesting that, months after the fact, all sorts of objections and protests are being voiced at the CNMI's awarding a very sizeable contract to Danny Aranza, former Director of the U.S. Department of Interior Office of Insular Affairs? Members of both the CNMI House and Senate, as well as Board of Education officials, have gone on record this past week to say that the contract awarded to Aranza's firm for preparing the CNMI's homeland security strategic plan was an unnecessary and wasteful expenditure of funds.

It would appear that the purpose of this belated outcry is to placate and appease the U.S. House leadership, which, it is rumored, was not at all inclined to consider the bill granting the CNMI a non-voting delegate with any sympathy—despite the supportive-seeming committee hearing—because of the continuing association of Aranza *et al.* with the CNMI administration.

Whether this belated show of anti-Aranza posture will have any effect remains to be seen.

At the risk of being called a heretic, a traitor, or worse, I can't help but ask why only one party to the "liberation" of Saipan will be so extravagantly honored during the celebration of the 60th anniversary of its occurrence. Being feted are the U.S. military who, during the invasion, fought and killed thousands of Japanese soldiers.

Particularly since the Japanese are no longer the enemy but the mainstay of the CNMI tourist industry, one would think that every effort would be made to temper, soften, deflect this slaughter and any remaining evidence thereof. Instead, 60 years later, as much of the militarism as can still be mustered will be featured—and flaunted—not only here in the CNMI, but worldwide. And as star feature of this glorification of war, Paul Tibbets Jr., pilot of the plane that dropped the bomb that annihilated millions of innocent

Amid the laughter, the need for tears

By **MARTHA MCNEIL HAMILTON**

The Washington Post

I've been to a lot of hilarious funerals and memorial services in the past year.

They were for good friends and former colleagues who were remembered with deep affection and many reminders of the reasons they were beloved.

But after one such service I came home and cried for hours until I finally felt some relief from my grief. The memorial service had been beautiful. Friends and family members spoke, reminding us of the wonderful, maddening, inspirational and idiosyncratic individual we had lost. Yet the service left me unsatisfied. It wasn't until I came home that I felt able to truly grieve at the unfairness of the loss.

We've become too urbane in the face of death. I like a good story as much as anyone, and I reveled in hearing what was really a superb collection of extraordinarily funny recollections. But what was missing was the collective wail that the death of a wonderful individual should have set off.

There were moments, brief moments, when speakers focused on solemnity and pain. And all spoke with love. Still, my sense was that there was a crowd of very accomplished, very funny, very self-consciously

Japanese civilians, is slated to be guest speaker.

And what of the Chamorros and Carolinians, whose homes and businesses were destroyed in the war, whose ranks were also decimated, who were "liberated" only to be placed in internment camps? Should not those who survived be equally honored? Shouldn't the caves where they sought refuge—in which some were trapped and died—also be memorialized?

How much more humane, healing, compassionate, merciful, uplifting, it would have been if the 60th, and indeed the 50th before it, were focused on peace, on forgiveness, on forging cooperation and understanding rather than emphasizing war, and killing and weapons of destruction. There is too much war in the world. So-called "terrorism" notwithstanding, the CNMI had an opportunity to promote peace and peaceful co-existence. Too bad it hasn't.

Short takes:

Anyone who has encountered a non-responsive 800 number should call either consumer counsel Brian Caldwell at the Attorney General's office (664-2341), director of the Telecommunications Committee Adam Turner (664-2209) or Verizon general manager Anthony Mosley (234-6100).

Mosley explained earlier this week, at a Telecommunications Committee meeting, that access to 800 numbers is determined by those organizations and companies who hold them, and the holders are not required to make 800 numbers universally available. But if the 800 number is not available only because the holder is unaware that the CNMI is part of the U.S. system, Mosley said Verizon would notify the holder of the error.

One of the most significant archaeological sites on Saipan is said to be in, on, and around the "footprint" of a hotel once proposed for the Nakamoto site in Garapan. Now the CNMI government is proposing to construct an artificial wetland on the site as a means of treating rain run-off from the Garapan Revitalization project. Said CIP Coordinator Chuck Jordan on MCV last night, "The most cost-effective way of treating the water is through a reconstructed wetlands."

Let us hope the site's artifacts are properly identified and protected—or removed—before being inundated.

And speaking of water: to all those who wrote to say that ice and steam are also water, I beg to differ. They are all forms of H₂O. But the word water refers only to the liquid manifestation, as any dictionary will confirm.

Would it speed up the demise of the destructive scarlet gourd vines on island if schools took on as science projects the breeding of the leaf-mining weevils that eat the vines?

My arithmetic handicap popped up again in last week's column. Aranza wasn't paid \$600,000. He was paid only (!) \$400,000—\$200,000 for the original contract, and \$200,000 more through an amendment.

Did anyone note the Nissan ad in the "Pacific Daily News" last week? It bragged about "moving mountains of dirt to create acres of customer parking and new and used car display." Well, perhaps Guam has enough land to afford acres of paving, but even so, I wouldn't brag about it. Paving adds to the heat sink, and in replacing vegetation, also adds to air pollution.

Technically speaking, the settlement agreement between the Marine Revitalization Corporation, Anthony Pellegrino and the CNMI government is dead, because the agreement itself says, "Absent enactment of a public law by the 13th CNMI Legislature within four months of the execution of this Settlement Agreement [which did not happen], there is no Settlement Agreement, and the arbitration shall resume."

Arbitration has not resumed, though a status conference is scheduled for some time next month.

Last but not least: according to the coconut wireless, a number of would-be TESOL students feel deprived because the Canadian Institute of English course has, apparently, been canceled. I would have thought they'd feel a great deal more deprived once they realized that their \$650 certificate bought them only a "certificate [that] can stand alone if you wish to teach volunteer classes or privately from your home"—to quote from its website "you asked" feature. (See "Will my certificate be recognized?" at <http://www.cie.ca/youasked.htm>).

sophisticated people trying to keep pain at bay. And we should have let it in the door. We should have acknowledged it.

There's a good reason we have formalized rituals for grieving. At a traditional funeral or memorial service, though there may be laughs during the eulogy and remembrances, most of the service is sad. Beautiful, evocative music. Prayers and scriptural reminders of both inescapable mortality and hoped-for immortality. The quiet ushering in and out of family.

More and more the services I attend, except for much older friends and family, depart from that script for something more personal and less solemn. In some ways, it makes for a wonderful remembrance of the friend or relative who is lost. But often it feels as if something is missing.

It's not that no one was weeping at the services I attended. Many people were. But we were weeping silently and individually, as if it weren't on the agenda. I reached a knuckle up to stop a tear, pretending to scratch my cheek. A few weeks after one such occasion, I said to another friend of the deceased, "I didn't see you at the memorial service."

"I was there," he said. "But I left immediately after, because I was crying, and it didn't seem to be that type of occasion."

Celebrating life is wonderful. But let's not forget to mourn death. It hurts.

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$182. Off-island subscription rate is \$376 per year. For additional subscription information, call 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact 235-2769. E-mail: sales.tribune@vzpacifica.net

3 men arrested for alleged assault

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

Authorities arrested Monday night three men who have been a subject of intensive investigations by law enforcers since November 2003 when a 43-year-old man lodged a complaint against them.

Police department spokesperson Sgt. Tom Blas Jr. said Martin F. Borja, 38; Chris W. Taimanglo, 20; and William M. Faisao, 19, were arrested based on the arrest warrants issued against them by Judge Juan Lizama.

Blas said COPPS officers Jesse Seman and Sandy Hambros arrested the three suspects in connection with a Nov. 16, 2003, assault case lodged by Saburo Stewart, 43.

Lizama issued the warrants after the police released the results of its investigation on the case. The officers immediately served the warrants to the suspects. All three were brought to the Adult Correctional facility in Susupe where they were booked and detained pending bail hearing.

The investigation report showed that the police department received a call for assistance around 1:28am of Nov. 16, 2003, due to a disturbance in the house of Stewart in Kagman III area. Medics were also dispatched due to injuries sustained by the victim.

According to the report, the victim and two of the three suspects were involved in a fight outside the victim's house. During the squabble, the suspects used rocks, a machete, and a baseball bat to allegedly attack the victim, causing serious injuries.

Stewart reportedly sustained lacerations on the back, legs, and arms, as well as other cuts and bruises on his body.

After the investigation, probers determined the culpability of the three suspects and asked that arrest warrants be issued against them.

The suspects are now facing disturbing the peace, assault and battery, assault with dangerous weapons, and criminal mischief charges.

Taiwanese boat seized off New Caledonia

A Taiwanese fishing boat has been intercepted south of New Caledonia for fishing illegally.

The French high commission in the New Caledonia capitol of Noumea says the ship had been spotted by a French surveillance aircraft and an inspection showed it carried dozens of tons of fresh and frozen fish.

The interception comes just days after the captain of another Taiwanese fishing boat was jailed for six months and fined almost US\$200,000 for fishing illegally. (RNZI/PIR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION

Saipan Southern High School students gather around Gov. Juan N. Babauta during the chief executive's recent visit at the campus, in line with the administration's education program. Babauta has been putting emphasis on public education as an important tool in the eventual recovery of the local economy.

MPLA board in limbo due to lack of quorum

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The lack of a quorum on the Board of Directors of the Marianas Public Lands Authority is stymieing efforts to move ahead on critical projects, including 36 new offers for land compensation that require the board's approval.

Only two members remain on the Board—chairperson, Ana Demapan-Castro and vice chairman Manny Villagomez—following the resignation of a member and term expiration of another.

Member Pedro M. Atalig resigned from the board effective Jan. 1, 2004, while member

Pedro Igitol's term expired on Dec. 31, 2003.

The board is composed of five seats, with one representative each from Tinian and Rota and three from Saipan. The CNMI Constitution also provides that one of the directors should be of Carolinian descent, while another should represent women.

At the moment, Demapan-Castro represents Saipan and the women's sector, while Villagomez represents Tinian. This means nobody is representing Rota, the Carolinians, and two seats for Saipan.

This, even as the MPLA has already readied 36 new offers for land compensation that re-

quire the board's approval.

"We have to get the board's approval before we can make the offer but the board can't possibly meet right now for lack of quorum," said MPLA commissioner Henry S. Hofschneider.

The board normally holds a regular meeting on the third Thursday of the month.

Hofschneider said that some names have been floated for appointment by the governor to the board. He declined to identify them.

Meantime, he said that 38 landowners have accepted the MPLA's initial offers and are like likely to get their compensation within the month.

"Once Finance puts the

money in MPLA's special account, we can start cutting checks," he said.

Hofschneider said that MPLA is offering "just and fair" compensation to landowners.

The MPLA board approved 75 folders for immediate land compensation last month. This came soon after the CNMI government floated a \$40-million bond, with the proceeds to be used primarily to settle the longstanding land claims by individuals against the government. The first batch of claims included acquisition of rights-of-way.

The Land Compensation Act mandates the government to prioritize the payment for lands used for rights-of-way, then

ponding basins, and later wetlands and other claims.

The payment to landowners is based on the valuation at the time of taking by the Commonwealth.

The MPLA has listed some 120 eligible land claimants in the CNMI.

Of the \$40-million bond, only about \$27 million will be used for land compensation, as \$11 million has been allotted to fund a pending prison project. The bond's Hawaii-based underwriter also deducted \$1.5 million from the total amount for cost of the bond issuance.

The government is given 30 years to pay off the loan at an annual interest of 6.75 percent.

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Business

World

Dollars & Sense

Stewart conviction likely to hurt firm

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
AP BUSINESS WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—The guilty verdict for Martha Stewart will badly damage her company, scaring more advertisers and perhaps readers and viewers away from her media business, industry experts said. Sales of her towels and other household goods may hold up better.

Within an hour of the verdict, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia Inc. issued a statement saying the board would meet promptly to carefully "evaluate the situation and take actions as appropriate."

"In the meantime, we are confident that our assets ... are more than sufficient to continue MSO's development as a leading 'how to' brand building company," it said.

Stewart said in a statement on her Web site that she would appeal and

"continue to fight to clear my name."

Observers, however, believe that with the name and face of the company tarnished by a conviction, it will be difficult to sustain the brand—especially with competition that has intensified since Stewart's legal woes began 22 months ago.

The Martha Stewart brand, associated with gracious living, has been stamped on magazines, TV shows and household products, and analysts say that without her image of perfection it has lost its distinctive edge.

"This is a terrible tragedy for a great brand," said Seth Siegel, co-founder of The Beanstalk Group, a trademark licensing agency.

Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, which has been adding new magazines and TV shows without Stewart's name over the past year—"Petkeeping with Marc Morrone" and "Everyday

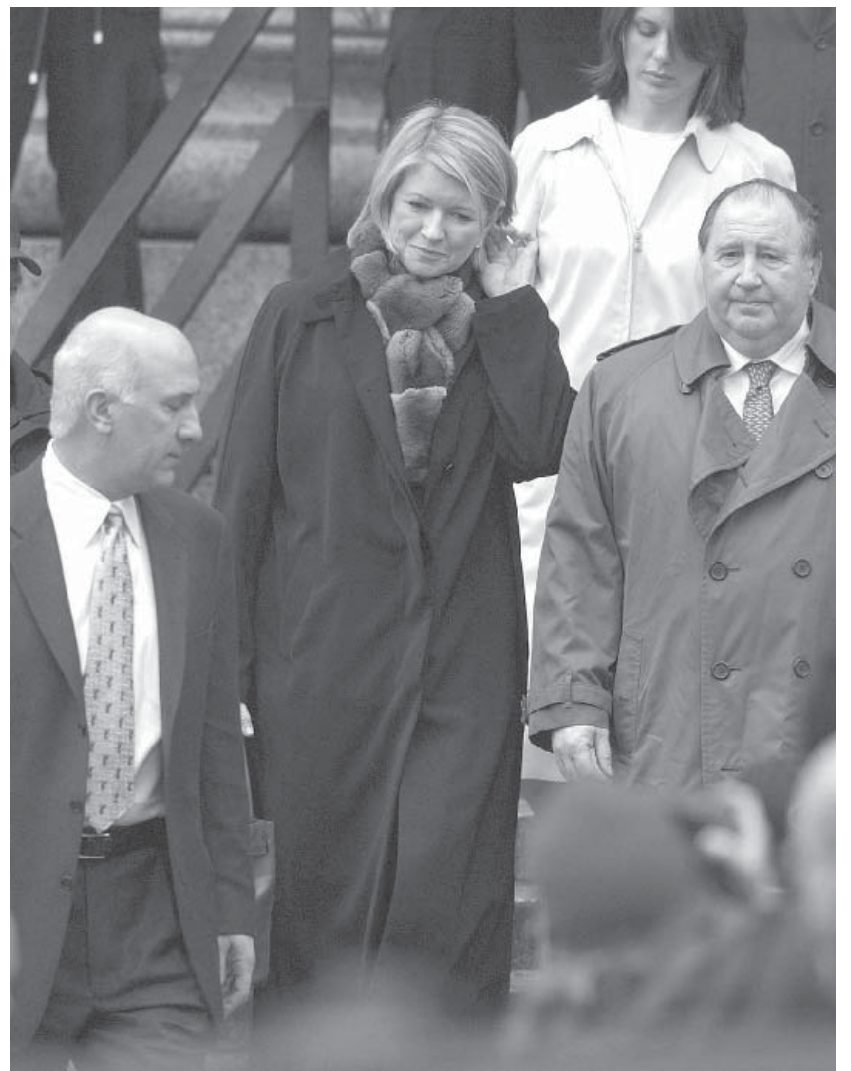
Food"—will have to keep developing other brands or personalities, he said.

"The company can still survive because it has phenomenal infrastructure," Siegel said, but added that it could take years for many advertisers to come back to its flagship magazine Martha Stewart Living and other name-sake publications.

Regardless of the trial's outcome, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia "has to rebuild itself" because of its dramatic declines in ad revenue, said T.K. MacKay, an analyst at Morningstar.

"The Martha Stewart brand is damaged, and they have to figure out ways to distance themselves, or convince advertisers to come back, or both," he said.

The good news, analysts said, is that Martha Stewart Living has \$170 million in cash on hand—enough to withstand several more quarters of declining ad revenue.



Martha Stewart leaves Manhattan federal court in New York Friday, March 5, 2004, flanked by her bodyguard Frank Senerchia, left, and her lawyer Robert Morvillo, right.

Job growth weak with 21,000 Feb. hires

WASHINGTON (AP)—The nation's payrolls grew by just 21,000 in February and left the unemployment rate stuck at 5.6 percent, just as President Bush revved up a re-election campaign that is counting heavily on a revived economy.

The frustrating news for out-of-work Americans, contained in a jobs snapshot released Friday by the Labor Department, showed a continuation of the slow employment growth the country has been enduring. The net gain in "nonfarm" payrolls—government and private employers—fell well short of the 125,000 jobs that economists had been forecasting.

Temp jobs rise, permanent ones lagging

NEW YORK (AP)—Conventional wisdom says that once companies begin hiring temporary workers, a turnaround in the overall job market must be close behind.

But nearly 2 1/2 years after the economy officially began its recovery, old assumptions about new jobs are providing more confusion than comfort.

A report released by the government Friday showed temporary employment increased once again in February—by 32,000 jobs—just as it has been doing for the better part of a year.

But the permanent hiring that was supposed to flow from the temp jobs is still not materializing. The economy as a whole added a scant 21,000 jobs last month, far below the 125,000 that analysts had forecast. That has economists, and even temporary staffing businesses, scratching their heads.

"We extrapolated based on the old model—your father's economic recovery: 'Oh, this is a signal that

(businesses) are going to hire permanently,'" said John Silvia, chief economist with Wachovia Corp. "We didn't realize that this isn't your father's economic recovery. It's not like the old days."

If this isn't your father's recovery, though, then what is it? And what to make of the strong evidence—including a sustained slowdown in layoffs, and the upturn in temp positions—that the job market is improving?

For companies that provide employers with temporary workers, the past year has seen business pick up dramatically, with employment swelling nearly 10 percent, said Steve Berchem, vice president of the American Staffing Association.

The figures kept by the government vary slightly from the industry's, but show an almost identical rise. Since April 2003, temporary employment has increased by about 215,000 to 2.37 million, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The little growth there was came from the government. Private-sector employment was flat.

"This remains a jobless recovery, pure and simple," said David Rosenberg, chief economist at Merrill Lynch. "Meaningful job creation remains alarmingly elusive."

The report also showed that job creation in December and January was weaker than previously thought. Total payrolls in December grew by just 8,000 and were up by 97,000 in January, according to revised figures.

"People are having difficulty finding a job because companies are still very cautious in taking on new employees," said Lynn Reaser, chief economist at Banc of America Capital Management. "The hiring doors aren't fully opened."

The overall seasonally adjusted civilian unemployment rate stayed at 5.6 percent in February as 392,000 people left the civilian work force for any number of reasons.

The health of the nation's economy, especially the job climate, is a major issue in this year's presidential race.

The economy has lost 2.2 million jobs since Bush took office in January 2001.

The weak job creation, however, comes even as the economy has been growing at a healthy rate. Productivity gains have allowed companies to produce more with fewer people, economists explained.

The economy, after struggling mightily to get back on its feet following the jolt of the 2001 recession and terrorist attacks, finally staged a material rebound in the second half of last year. But for out-of-work Americans, it hasn't felt like better economic times.

There were some 8.2 million people unemployed in February, with the average duration of 20.3 weeks without work. That marked the highest average duration of joblessness in over 20 years.

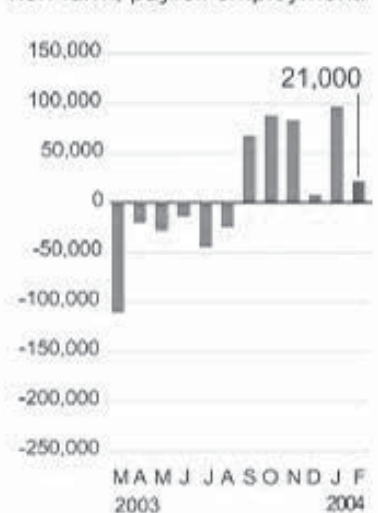
Unemployment

Here is a look at the unemployment rate for the past year.

Seasonally adjusted



Here is a look at the change in non-farm, payroll employment.



SOURCE: Department of Labor AP

Dow climbs nearly 8; Nasdaq declines 7

NEW YORK (AP)—Disappointing job growth figures left stocks mixed after a volatile session Friday, with investors guessing whether the underlying economy was strong enough to warrant current share prices. But perhaps the biggest news of the day was Martha Stewart.

After the founder of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia Inc. was found guilty, the company's stock plunged \$3.17, or 23 percent, to close at \$10.86, the biggest percentage loser on the New York Stock Exchange for the session. Shares had skyrocketed \$2.24, or 16 percent, at \$16.27 in the hour before Stewart's guilty verdict was announced. Trading was halted for a half hour afterward.

The Dow Jones industrial average advanced 7.55, or 0.1 percent, to 10,595.55.

Broader stock indicators were narrowly mixed. The Standard & Poor's

500 index gained 1.99, or 0.2 percent, at 1,156.87, and the Nasdaq composite index was down 7.48, or 0.4 percent, at 2,047.63.

Despite the day's volatility, the markets ended the week with small gains, continuing a lackluster trend that has stalled Wall Street's 11-month rally. For the week, the Dow gained 0.1 percent, the S&P 500 rose 1.0 percent and the Nasdaq was up 0.9 percent. It was the second straight week of gains for the S&P, while the Dow and Nasdaq reversed last week's downward trend.

Advancing issues outnumbered decliners by a 9-to-5 ratio on the New York Stock Exchange, where consolidated volume came to 1.81 billion shares, compared to 1.61 billion on Thursday.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 1.16, or 0.2 percent, to 599.54.

McDonald's monthly sales gain 23 percent

OAK BROOK, ILL. (AP)—McDonald's Corp.'s sales jumped a whopping 22.6 percent in February over last year's numbers, the fast-food chain said Friday, extending a recovery that began last spring and sending its stock to a nearly two-year high.

Comparable sales from McDonald's-brand restaurants worldwide, reflecting results from outlets open more than a year, were a better-than-expected 13.9 percent in a key measure of the strength of McDonald's comeback.

The hamburger giant's 13,000-plus U.S. restaurants had the best showing,

with comparable sales up 20 percent. Europe, where the recovery has been slower to take hold, posted a solid 7.7-percent increase.

Analysts and the company credited a combination of factors for the especially large U.S. gain: new products introduced since February 2003, less discounting, additional hours, the weak dollar and an extra day because of leap year.

McDonald's chairman and CEO Jim Cantalupo said that while some of the reasons for the impressive increase were unique, they show that the company's strategy is paying off.

United States

Around the Globe

Millions in Madrid protest train attacks

By **ANDREW SELSKY**
AP WRITER

MADRID, Spain (AP)—Millions of Spaniards poured into the streets Friday, chanting "Cowards!" and "Assassins!" in a protest of the bombings that killed 199 people. The Basque separatist group ETA denied government allegations that it staged the attacks.

Many of the estimated 2.3 million marchers in Madrid huddled against a steady rain in a bobbing mass of umbrellas that clogged the capital's squares and the area around the Atocha station, where two of the four trains blew up during Thursday morning's rush hour.

"It is not raining. Madrid is crying," said Jorge Mendez, a 20-year-old telecommunications student.

In a show of national unity, massive crowds also gathered in Barcelona, Seville, Valencia and even in

Spain's Canary Islands off Western Africa. Nationwide, more than 11 million marched, state TV said.

Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar, who was joined by other European leaders as he led one march, pledged to hunt down the terrorists whose bombs sparked new fears about Europe's vulnerability to attack.

The debate over who was responsible for the attacks could affect the outcome of national elections set for Sunday.

Aznar and his government ministers blamed the armed group ETA, which has fought for decades for an independent Basque homeland. But there was concern that Islamic militants and perhaps even the al-Qaida terror network had been involved.

If ETA is found responsible, that could boost support for Mariano Rajoy, Aznar's hand-picked candidate to succeed him as prime minister. Both have supported a

crackdown on ETA's campaign for an independent state in northern Spain, ruling out talks and backing a ban on ETA's political wing, Batasuna.

However, if Thursday's bombings are seen by voters as the work of al-Qaida, that could draw their attention to Aznar's vastly unpopular decision to endorse the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq and deploy Spanish troops there.

Rajoy is 3-5 percentage points ahead of Socialist candidate Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero in polls. Polls close Sunday at 2 p.m. EST and exit poll results will be available soon thereafter.

A Batasuna leader, Arnaldo Otegi, accused the government of seeking political gain by blaming ETA. "The Spanish government is lying," he said.

The attack's lethal coordination and timing—10 explosions within 15 minutes—suggested al-Qaida. But the compressed dynamite used in the backpack

bombs is an explosive favored by ETA.

ETA denied responsibility, according to Gara, a Basque newspaper that the armed group uses to issue statements. The daily Gara said a caller claiming to represent ETA phoned its newsroom Friday to deny government allegations that the group was to blame.

It was the first time ETA was known to have issued such a denial. The group normally claims its attacks in statements to pro-Basque independence media several weeks later.

Suspicious of al-Qaida involvement gained weight after police found a stolen van with seven detonators and an Arabic-language tape of Quranic verses parked in a suburb near where the stricken trains originated. A London-based Arabic newspaper also received a claim of responsibility in al-Qaida's name that called the attack "part of settling old accounts with Spain, the

crusader, and America's ally in its war against Islam."

In a chilling account of the bombings, Spanish radio station Cadena Ser broadcast a 12-second recording of an unidentified woman who had called a colleague's voice mail after an initial blast on a train at the Atocha station.

The woman, who survived, was in the process of evacuating as she frantically says: "I'm in Atocha. There's a bomb on the train! We had to -" and then two more blasts are heard amid her screams.

The death toll climbed to 199 on Friday with the death of a 7-month-old girl. Of the more than 1,400 wounded, 367 people remained hospitalized, about 50 in serious condition. Of the dead, 84 bodies remained unidentified. Since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States, only the Bali nightclub bombings that killed 202 people in 2002 have been more deadly.

New Haiti leader warns of Aristide trip

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Former Haitian exile Gerard Latortue was sworn in Friday as the country's prime minister, promising to unite the country after months of bloodshed and political strife that led to the ouster of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Before taking the oath of office, Latortue warned that Aristide's plan to return to nearby Jamaica early next week was ratcheting up tensions in the Haitian capital, and he told the Jamaican leader that hosting Aristide would be seen as "an unfriendly act."

The Jamaican foreign ministry said it had warned Aristide that he must not use Jamaica as a "launching pad" for a return to power.

Latortue was sworn in before a crowd of 200 people under heavy security, saying he was happy to serve his country.

"This is an occasion for hope for all Haitians," he said. "Together we will form a responsible government that respects its institutions, and I will see

that every dollar given to development projects will be well spent."

Latortue, 69, is a former U.N. official and business consultant who arrived in Haiti on Wednesday after living in Florida.

He spent much of the 29-year Duvalier family dictatorship, which ended in 1986, in exile. He became foreign minister in 1988 for former President Leslie Manigat, who was toppled in a military coup.

Earlier, Latortue told pro-Aristide politicians that he wants to hold legislative elections in six to eight months, Cabinet Minister Leslie Voltaire said. He also criticized Jamaica's decision to host ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was expected to return to the region early next week from exile in Africa.

Latortue told reporters that Aristide is no longer Haiti's leader, dampening speculation that the former leader's trip might lead to negotiations for the his return. Aristide insists he remains Haiti's legitimate president.



Latortue



LONGEST-SERVING POPE

Pope John Paul II will reach another milestone in his papacy Sunday. John Paul, who marked the 25th anniversary of his election as pope on Oct. 16, will surpass Pope Leo XIII to become the third-longest-serving pontiff in the history of the Roman Catholic Church. Here, he breaks into a long laugh during an audience at the Vatican in this Feb. 17, 2004 photo.

Egypt to host Israel-Palestinian talks

JERUSALEM (AP)—Egypt will host talks between Yasser Arafat's government, Islamic militant groups and other Palestinian factions on how to control the Gaza Strip after a proposed Israeli withdrawal, an aide to the Palestinian leader said Friday.

A trio of top U.S. envoys, meanwhile, held another round of meetings with Israeli and Palestinian officials to learn more about Israel's proposal to pull soldiers and Jewish settlers out of Gaza and perhaps also parts of the West Bank.

Israel has hinted to the Palestinians that if there is quiet in Gaza, it might be willing to discuss the fate of the West Bank with the Palestinian Authority, said Nabil Abu Rdenah, a top Arafat aide.

Keeping the volatile Gaza Strip under control won't be easy. Gaza militants have not succeeded in crossing the heavily militarized fence and border zone with

Israel but have launched crude rockets over it, causing some damage in Israeli border towns. Those attacks have drawn fierce Israeli military raids.

Israeli airstrikes on militants, gunbattles and Palestinian attacks on soldiers in Gaza have increased in recent days, a sign that both sides may want to paint a withdrawal as a victory.

Inside the strip, there are growing signs of anarchy, with rival armed gangs and security forces battling for influence.

Abu Rdenah said Egyptian-sponsored talks between the Palestinian factions and the Palestinian Authority will be held in Cairo and the Palestinian territories in the coming weeks, though he didn't give a date. "The dialogue will focus on the aftermath of an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, how the Palestinians should run Gaza," Abu Rdenah said.

Although presented as a unilateral withdrawal, Israel is seeking solid

backing from the United States and coordination with Egypt—and to a lesser extent with the Palestinians—to make sure "chaos and anarchy" do not prevail in Gaza, a senior Israeli official said on condition of anonymity.

Israel may even formalize a written agreement with the United States that would include details on the withdrawal and U.S. guarantees, the official said.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his Palestinian counterpart Ahmed Qureia will also discuss the plan, the official said. A long-delayed first summit between the two leaders is tentatively set for Tuesday.

The three visiting U.S. envoys—Undersecretary of State William Burns, Deputy Director of the National Security Council Stephen Hadley, and the council's Mideast specialist, Elliot Abrams—met Palestinian and Israeli officials Friday before leaving the region.

Iran freezes UN nuclear inspections

VIENNA, Austria (AP)—Iran abruptly froze further U.N. inspections of its nuclear program for six weeks on Friday, throwing into turmoil international attempts to verify Tehran's claims that it is developing atomic power and not weapons.

The move was dismissed as unimportant by Iranian representatives. But diplomats familiar with the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency described it as a potentially insurmountable obstacle to the agency's efforts to deliver a judgment by June on the nature Tehran's past and present nuclear ambitions.

One diplomat described the freeze until the end of April as counterproductive to Iran's stated aim of dispelling suspicions about more than two decades of secret nuclear activities that included uranium enrichment and other activities that can be used to make weapons.

"If they really have nothing to hide, it is further against their interests" to raise questions about why they are placing their nuclear activities off limits to outside inspections, said the diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The diplomat said that the move may indicate fear that inspectors will find new incriminating evidence. It could also be an attempt to show "political muscle" at the ongoing meeting of the IAEA board of governors, which is debating how harshly to censure Iran for its spotty record of revealing past nuclear secrets, the diplomat added.

The United States insists Iran tried to make nuclear weapons, something Tehran denies. A U.S. official said the freeze on inspections "is going to hurt Iran's chances" of proving the Americans wrong, adding, "if they take a step like this, they certainly look guilty."

Life & Style

Wrestlemania marks 20th anniversary

By LUKAS I. ALPERT
AP WRITER

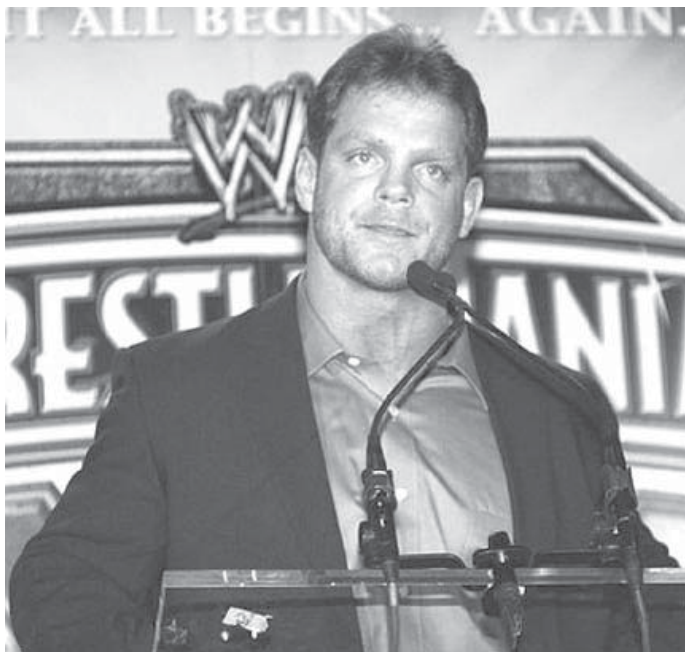
When Wrestlemania first stormed into Madison Square Garden, its mix of high-wire theatrics, mayhem and drama thrust the no-holds-barred world of professional wrestling into mainstream consciousness.

Part Super Bowl, part "Melrose Place" and part riot, the latest edition of Wrestlemania bursts back into New York on Sunday, celebrating its 20th anniversary event with what World Wrestling Entertainment Chairman Vince McMahon touts as the greatest sports entertainment event ever.

"Every sport has its big event at the end of the year, its World Series, its Super Bowl," McMahon told a news conference Thursday. "Why shouldn't we have our year-end extravaganza?"

Since its 1985 debut, Wrestlemania has been the battleground for professional wrestling's biggest rivalries, a forum to resolve its plot lines, and a vehicle for making its stars' household names.

"Wrestlemania was the first time in our business that there was a national event," said WWE president Linda McMahon, Vince McMahon's wife.



Chris Benoit, a pro wrestler with World Wrestling Entertainment, speaks at a press conference in New York Thursday.

It's been a long road since Hulk Hogan and Mr. T squared off against "Rowdy" Roddy Piper and Paul "Mr. Wonderful" Orndorff in Wrestlemania I to defend singer Cyndi Lauper's honor, with Andre the Giant present, Muhammad Ali as guest referee and Liberace as ceremonial timekeeper.

This year's ultra-hyped event will feature five packed hours of high-flying rumbling and celeb-

rity appearances. Kurt Angle, a gold-medalist wrestler in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, will battle Eddie Guerrero for the WWE championship.

"To be a part of an event that guys like Hulk Hogan and Andre the Giant defined—I'm looking forward to getting into the ring," Angle said.

Other highlights include Triple H vs. Chris Benoit vs. Shawn Michaels in a three-way match for

the world heavyweight championship, and Sable and Torrie vs. Stacy and Miss Jackie battling in another match.

The event also mysteriously promises that "the dead will rise again," an apparent reference to "The Undertaker," a repeatedly killed-off and revived character.

Before the fighting begins, the WWE Hall of Fame will induct former Minnesota Gov. Jesse "The Body" Ventura and Pete Rose, the disgraced former baseball star and previous Wrestlemania celebrity guest.

With a sellout crowd at the Garden—tickets top out at \$754.50—and the event available on pay-per-view in 90 countries for \$49.99, the WWE is hoping for a huge earner, after declining ratings over the past few years.

As the WWE's main event, Wrestlemania serves as a divining rod of the company's fortunes, which have gone through more ups and downs, side changes and plot twists than even its ingeniously scripted matches.

Although mostly seen through closed circuit television, Wrestlemania I marked the league's first experiment with pay-per-view. The WWE's 11 annual pay-per-view events now generate a quarter of its revenues.

Depp, Turturro elevate 'Secret Window'

By DAVID GERMAIN
AP MOVIE WRITER

Johnny Depp and John Turturro can elevate almost any movie, and they do lift the psychological thriller "Secret Window" a bit above the morass of horror clichés that riddle this latest Stephen King adaptation.

Yet Depp's manic tics and Turturro's menace carry only so far. The secrets of "Secret Window" are obvious almost from the start, and much of the movie comes off as a retread of earlier King tales about writers wrestling evil doppelgangers or wacko readers.

The movie begins with promising moodiness as director and screenwriter David Koepp quickly establishes the scenario: Successful author Mort Rainey (Depp) catches his wife (Maria Bello) in bed with her lover (Timothy Hutton). Six months later, Mort's a basket case with writer's block, alone with his dog at a cabin in the woods, unable even to put pen to paper and sign the couple's divorce settlement.

A booming knock on his door awakens Mort from one of his daylong snoozes on the couch. At the door is John Shooter (Turturro), a bullying Mississippi redneck who accuses Mort of plagiarizing his short story



Johnny Depp stars as the troubled writer Mort Rainey in Columbia Pictures psychological thriller "Secret Window."

and demanding that things be put right between them.

Mort angrily dismisses Shooter, who leaves behind his tattered manuscript. Unsettled by the similarities between Shooter's tale and a story he published years earlier, Mort tumbles into a nightmare of escalating terror as his tormen-

tor moves from threats to ugly deeds.

Koepp, who directed "Stir of Echoes" and wrote "Panic Room," has a flair for capturing fidgety characters in claustrophobic spaces. With "Secret Window," Koepp again wrings solid dramatic punch out of comparatively limited character interplay.

Depp's left alone prowling and ranting much of the time, and he admirably turns his comic jitteriness from last year's blockbuster "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl" toward alarmingly spastic hysteria here.

Turturro, though doing little more than a straight version of the Southern drawl he copped in "O Brother, Where Are Thou?," brings creepy intensity to Shooter's confrontations with Mort.

Bello nicely captures the conflicted antipathy and affection a spouse feels for her ex. But Hutton and co-stars Charles S. Dutton as a gumshoe Mort hires to ward off Shooter and Len Cariou as the hapless local sheriff are largely filling up space in shallow roles.

The real problem is that "Secret Window" borrows so heavily from conventions in any number of old fright flicks. The movie is laden with recycled elements from King's own "Mystery," "The Shining" and "The Dark Half," and unless you're a virgin viewer of horror tales, you'll likely see the plot twists coming a long way off.

"Secret Window," released by Sony's Columbia Pictures, is rated PG-13 for violence/terror, sexual content and language. Running time: 97 minutes. Two stars out of four.

BEST SELLERS LIST

NONFICTION

"The Proper Care and Feeding of Husbands," by Laura Schlessinger (HarperCollins: \$24.95) Talk show host tells how to manage the "very simple creature" that is man.

"The Price of Loyalty," by Ron Suskind (Simon & Schuster: \$26) A scathing portrayal of the George W. Bush White House by former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill.

"Deliver Us From Evil," by Sean Hannity (Regan Books: \$26.95) The conservative pundit argues against appeasement and multilateralism and for a proactive stance in fighting our enemies.

"American Dynasty," by Kevin Phillips (Viking: \$25.95) An account of the Bush family's use of their Ivy League network, political maneuvering and vast wealth to win the White House.

"Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," by Ted Allen (Clarkson Potter: \$27.50) How to be better dressed, groomed, cultivated and more knowledgeable about food and wine and culture.

"The Purpose-Driven Life," by Rick Warren (Zondervan: \$19.99) How the "God-ordained" principles of worship, community, discipleship, ministry and evangelism bring fulfillment.

"Hollywood Animal," by Joe Eszterhas (Alfred A. Knopf: \$26.95) The noted screenwriter takes on the beast that is the movie industry in telling the tale of his life's journey.

"Down and Dirty Pictures," by Peter Biskind (Simon & Schuster: \$26.95) A look at the rise of indie films and the influence of the Sundance Film Festival and Harvey and Bob Weinstein's Miramax.

"The Automatic Millionaire," by David Bach (Broadway Books: \$19.95) A common-sense guide to financial planning through automatic contributions to retirement plans and investment vehicles.

"The Fabric of the Cosmos," by Brian Greene (Knopf: \$28.95) The nature of reality is explored through simple explanations of concepts such as string theory and inflationary cosmology.

FICTION

"The Da Vinci Code," by Dan Brown (Doubleday: \$24.95) A Louvre curator's killing leads to clues hidden in Leonardo's paintings and a secret society with something to hide.

"The Last Juror," by John Grisham (Doubleday: \$27.95) A convicted killer on parole for a brutal rape and murder is bent on retribution as he returns to his small town.

"The Five People You Meet in Heaven," by Mitch Albom (Hyperion: \$19.95) An amusement park maintenance man faces his life, death and afterlife in this three-part parable.

"The Amateur Marriage," by Anne Tyler (Knopf: \$24.95) A mismatched couple struggle over the course of 30 years to make their marriage bearable.

"The Best Awful," by Carrie Fisher (Simon & Schuster: \$24) Suzanne Vale battles drugs and bipolar disorder in this black-comic sequel to "Postcards From the Edge."

"Angels & Demons," by Dan Brown (Atria: \$17.95) A Harvard scholar uncovers a vendetta against the Catholic Church by a secret society known as the Illuminati.

"The Namesake," by Jhumpa Lahiri (Houghton Mifflin: \$24) An immigrant Bengali couple and their son, named for the writer Nikolai Gogol, experience cultural jolts in America.

"The Zero Game," by Brad Meltzer (Warner Books: \$25.95) Bored congressional aides gamble in a clandestine game for fun, but things turn deadly in a hurry.

"Absolute Friends," by John le Carre (Little, Brown: \$26.95) Two former Cold War spies are drawn into the rising political opposition to the United States' invasion of Iraq.

"The Lady and the Unicorn," by Tracy Chevalier (Dutton: \$23.95) A 15th century artisan meets his patron's daughter while designing the now-famous tapestries for the nobleman's great hall. (*Los Angeles Times*)

J.K. Rowling hints at more 'Harry Potter'

LONDON (AP)—Harry Potter may be set to grow up. Writer J.K. Rowling hinted Thursday that she may not stop at seven books about the adventures of the young wizard and may write a further installment featuring the adult Harry.

In a live Web chat to mark World Book Day, Rowling—who has always insisted she'll write only seven Potter books—was asked by a fan if she intended to write books about Harry after he leaves Hogwarts, the academy for wizards.

"Probably not. But I'll never say never because every time I do I immediately break the vow," she replied.

Rowling, whose wealth was

recently estimated at \$1 billion, is writing the sixth Potter book. The most recent installment is "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix."

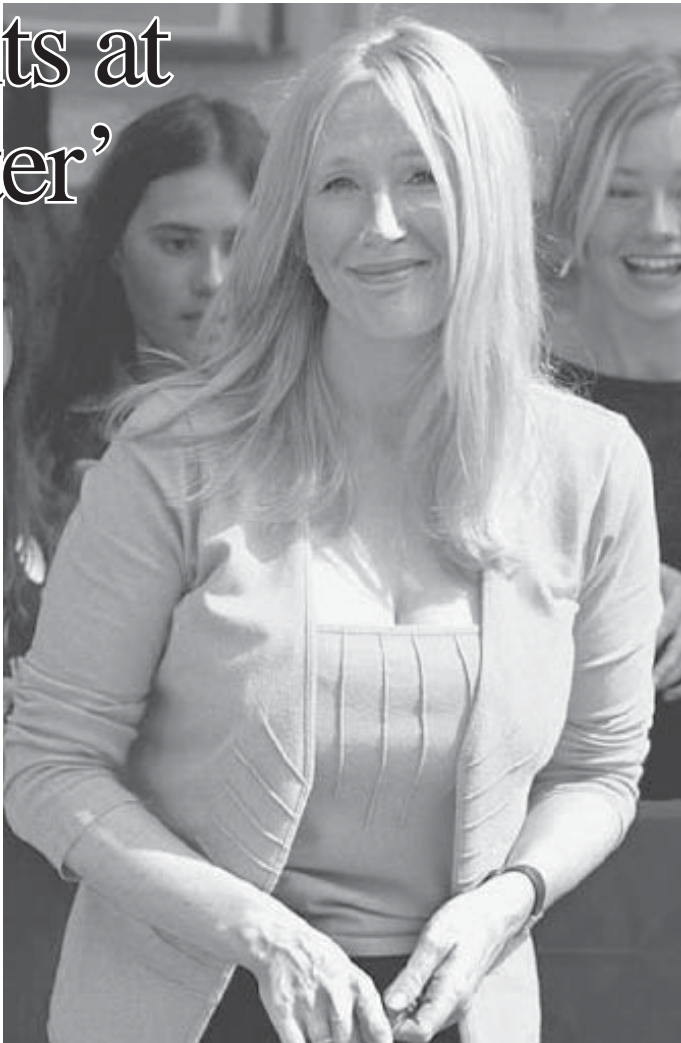
"I can't say when it will be released because that's down to my publishers," she said. "But it's going really well. I am loving writing it."

She promised the latest book would include more romance for the boy wizard, but hinted he would also face a terrible ordeal. She added that she planned to try a "completely different genre" of writing when she has finished the seventh book, but did not specify.

More than 16,000 Potter fans submitted questions during the hour-long discussion.

Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling, attends a reading of her new book, "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix," at the Royal Albert Hall, London, England, on June 26, 2003.

AP



Hundreds line up for piece of 'Sex'

NEW YORK (AP)—Several hundred people lined up on Prince Street Thursday morning for a piece of "Sex and the City."

Ina, a consignment store in NoLiTa, acquired designer items from the HBO show's costume department, giving customers a chance to don the styles of

Carrie Bradshaw (Sarah Jessica Parker) and her pals.

The items didn't come cheaply. A brown Givenchy top went for \$140 and a pair of red Badgley Mischka shoes sold for \$275.

"We didn't anticipate that the clothing from the show

would fit the average New York City-size woman," shopper Melissa Weinberg told The New York Times in Friday's editions. "But some do, and others were obviously Sarah Jessica Parker's."

The series finale of "Sex and the City" aired last month.

Woman offers to pay \$1M of Stewart's bills

NEW YORK (AP)—To the ranks of Martha Stewart wannabes add Rhona Silver, a Long Island caterer who has offered to contribute \$1 million toward Stewart's legal bills in exchange for the opportunity to run her company for \$1 a year.

"I don't have to be Martha," said Silver, proprietor of Rhona Silver's Huntington Townhouse. "I could be Rhona and help run that company."

Stewart, the longtime guru of gracious living, was convicted last week of lying to investigators

about why she sold 3,928 shares of ImClone Systems stock.

A spokeswoman for Stewart, who faces sentencing on June 17, did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

Silver, whose clients have included Hillary Rodham Clinton and Billy Joel, said she has the expertise to preside over each component of Stewart's empire including TV shows, magazines and KMart housewares.

"I have been in the industry since I'm 10 years old. I run thousands of events a year,"

said Silver, flashing a \$1 million check at a news conference Thursday. "I also hold a law degree from Hofstra Law School, so on the business side I have the wherewithal, the intelligence and the smarts to run a company."

Silver called Stewart her mentor but has so far admired her idol mainly from afar.

"I've met her on several occasions at parties," she said. "I don't know her personally but I would love to have the opportunity to know her better."

Caterer Rhona Silver holds up a one million dollar check made out to her mentor Martha Stewart at a news conference in New York, Thursday, March 11, 2004.

AP



AP

Britney Spears at the premiere of Pepsi's new television commercial in Trafalgar Square, London, Monday, Jan. 26, 2004.

Britney to develop Arden line

NEW YORK (AP)—Pop star Britney Spears has signed a deal with Elizabeth Arden Inc. to develop and market her own line of perfumes and cosmetics, the company said Friday.

Spears' first product will be a fragrance, which will be launched in the fall at department stores, the New York-based company said, adding that Spears is "personally involved" with all aspects of developing the product.

On Thursday, Elizabeth Arden posted a loss of \$11.1 million for the fourth quarter due to restructuring and debt-reduction costs. But sales for the quarter surged 26 percent, helped by new products and the weak dollar.

In midday trading, shares of Elizabeth Arden were at \$22.36, up 16 cents, or 0.7 percent, on the New York Stock Exchange.

Daughter refuses to play part in mom's reconciliation drama

By AVIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: My mother was unloving and downright cruel to all of her children, but now that we're all over 18, she has suddenly decided she wants to have relationships with us. (I haven't even told her that I've been engaged for two months.) She has caused so much suffering and heartache, but I don't know how to tell her to leave me alone.



Dear Abby

She recently showed up at my house. I don't know how she got my address, because I didn't give it to her and I never return her calls. I don't understand how she can act like everything is fine between us and get angry with me for not calling her back.

Mother has never in her life said the word "sorry." I am at a loss as to how to deal with her.

ANGRY AND CONFUSED IN PHOENIX

DEAR ANGRY: I have heard from readers who cut themselves off from their parents after abusive childhoods and later regretted that there was no closure. I have also heard from people who did it and have no regrets about it at all.

If you feel that any aspect of your relationship with her is salvageable, consider trying to heal the relationship. However, if that is not possible, tell her plainly that you want to be left alone, and if she doesn't cooperate, you will be forced to get a restraining order. Then do it.

DEAR ABBY: My niece, "Debra," had her breasts enlarged before she was even 20, and she dresses to draw attention to them. She's so proud that she pushes them out even further, which makes her posture appear abnormal.

We are modest people, and we felt especially uncomfortable last summer at a family beach party where she pranced around in a thong!

Now we have a messy situation. Debra has accused a male family member of behaving inappropriately toward her. He denies ever thinking "that way" about her, but admits he couldn't help looking at her breasts "because they were on display all the time."

My sister, Debra's mother, refuses to accept that her daughter is in any way responsible for this mess, and says the man involved is completely at fault. I blame Debra.

Is it fair for a girl to dress seductively and then accuse a male family member of behaving inappropriately?

MODEST IN COLORADO

DEAR MODEST: Let's stop assigning blame and assess what's really happening. For years, Debra probably felt something was lacking. Since she has had her enhancement surgery, it appears she has been overcompensating. The episode with the thong bikini at the family beach party is an example of a girl who once felt invisible and is now flaunting her assets.

However, when someone prominently puts something on display, it's unrealistic to expect viewers to wear blinders or look away. Debra can't have it both ways.

DEAR ABBY: My neighbor runs a licensed day-care center in her home. She does a good job and has lots of children in her care. Some of the children are the same ages as my kids, and they often spend an afternoon or a whole day playing at my house. Should I be concerned about being responsible for her "clients" when she is paid to take care of them? Is there a liability issue that I need to confront? It's an awkward situation for me, and I'd like to hear your thoughts.

LIABLE IN SYRACUSE

DEAR LIABLE: To heck with my "thoughts." Contact your insurance agent TODAY. If a child is injured on your property, there is definitely a liability issue!

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby - Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)



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Hawks' Jackson scores 42 points in win over Wizards



ATLANTA (AP)—Stephen Jackson scored a career-high 42 points and five Atlanta players scored at least 20 in a 138-124 win over the Washington Wizards on Friday night.

The last team to have five players score 20 points or more in a game was Orlando, which did it on Jan. 26, 1993. Atlanta last did it in 1968 at Seattle.

"We're pretty far down in the standings and not a lot of people really want to watch us," said Jackson, who had 31 points in the second half.

Bob Sura scored 28, along with 10 assists and nine rebounds, while Jason Terry had 23 points, Jason Collier 22 (also a career high) and Chris Crawford 20.

"We just didn't have a clue what they were doing," said Washington's Jerry Stackhouse. "You don't expect that from a team with that record. They probably didn't have a whole lot of fear of us, either."

In all, the game featured eight 20-point scorers; Gilbert Arenas led Washington with 30, giving him 70 over the Wizards' last two games, while tacklehouse had 29 and Juan Dixon 23.

Pacers 99, Celtics 81

In Boston, Reggie Miller scored 18 points and Al Harrington added 16 to lead Indiana past Boston for its seventh straight win.

Paul Pierce had 21 points for Boston, reaching 10,000 points faster than anyone in Celtics history—in his 431st game. Larry Bird reached the plateau in his 436th game.

Indiana started to take control with a 10-1 run over the final 3 1/2 minutes of the first half for a 48-39 lead. The Pacers opened the second half by scoring 13 of the first 16 points to build their lead to 61-42. It was 72-50 on Harrington's basket in the final minute of the quarter.

Nets 88, Bulls 76

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Jason Kidd had his 59th career triple-double to tie Larry Bird for fourth-most in NBA history as New Jersey beat Chicago.

Kidd finished with 13 points, 13 assists and 10 rebounds as the Nets won consecutive games for the first time since Feb. 24—the final victory in their 14-game winning streak that ended the next night in Minnesota.

Jamal Crawford scored 24 of his 25 points in the second half to help turn a laugher into a game that had Nets' fans booing late in the third quarter.

Heat 82, SuperSonics 74

In Miami, Eddie Jones scored 19 points, and Rafer Alston hit two crucial 3-pointers in the final two minutes as Miami downed Seattle.

The Heat led by 16 points in the first half—thanks to Seattle tying a franchise record for futility—but had to rally down the stretch after falling behind.

Alston hit back-to-back 3-pointers to rally the Heat to their fourth win in five games. Miami trailed 72-70, but Alston hit a 3 to put the Heat ahead then another to highlight a game-closing 12-2 run.

76ers 99, Knicks 94, 2OT

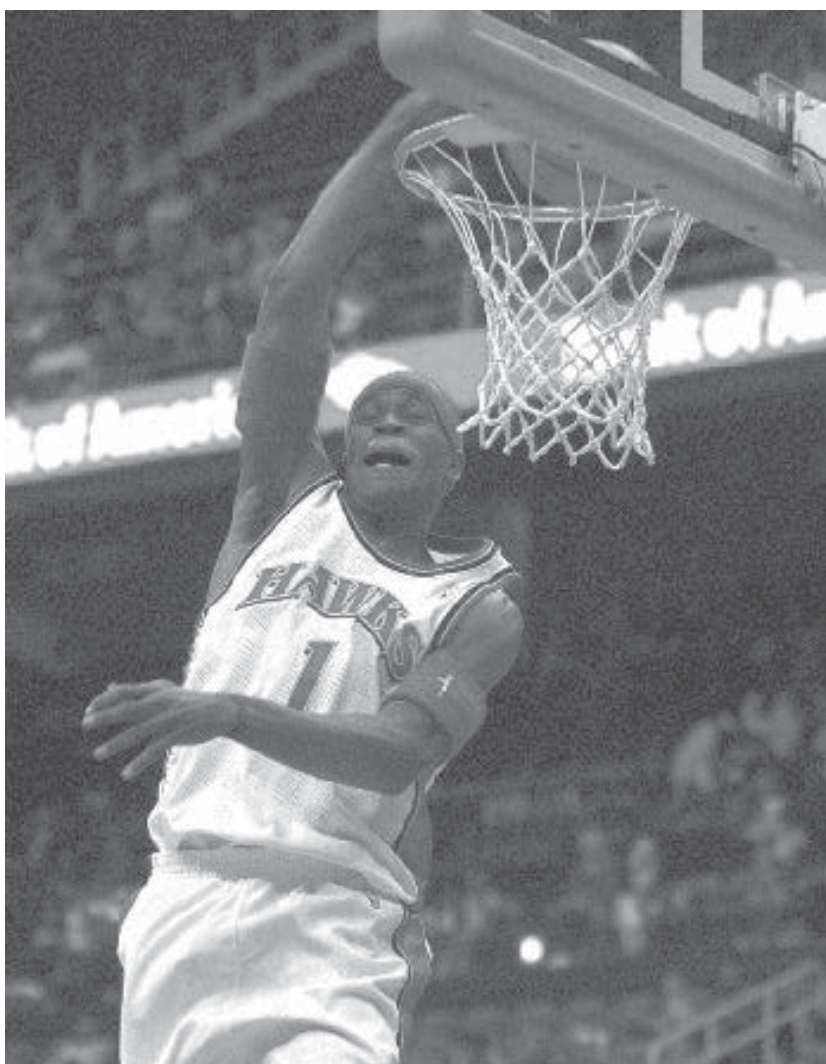
In Philadelphia, Kenny Thomas hit a game-tying 3-pointer with 0.4 seconds left in regulation, then made a tying layup with 0.2 seconds left in the first overtime of Philadelphia win over New York.

Thomas scored 25 points and grabbed 16 rebounds for his 10th straight double-double, helping the Sixers—again without Allen Iverson—win their season-high fourth straight game. Aaron McKie scored 22 points and Eric Snow added 19.

Allan Houston had 25 points and Stephon Marbury 21 for the Knicks (29-37), who are now only one game ahead of the Sixers (28-38) in the Eastern Conference standings.

Timberwolves 96, Lakers 86

In Minneapolis, Kevin Garnett had 20 points and 12 rebounds and Troy Hudson added 19 points off the bench to lead Minnesota over Karl Malone and



Atlanta Hawks forward Stephen Jackson dunks against the Washington Wizards during the second half Friday, March 12, 2004, in Atlanta.

the Los Angeles Lakers.

Shaquille O'Neal led Los Angeles with 24 points and 13 rebounds and Malone had 13 points in his first appearance since Dec. 21, but the Lakers lacked the spunk showed by the Wolves in the decisive second half.

Grizzlies 98, Clippers 89

In Memphis, Tennessee, Pau Gasol scored 24 points and grabbed a career-high 18 rebounds as Memphis beat the Los Angeles Clippers to all but guarantee the first .500 season in franchise history.

Memphis won its 41st game of the

season as Gasol, playing in honor of his countrymen killed and injured in Thursday's terrorist bombings in Spain, took over in the fourth quarter when the Clippers made a comeback. Bonzi Wells, who had 19 points, scored nine straight Memphis points to finish off the Clippers.

Spurs 99, Warriors 74

In San Antonio, Malik Rose, starting in place of the injured Tim Duncan, scored 17 points to help San Antonio defeat Golden State.

Six other Spurs finished in double fig-

ures. Kevin Willis, at 41 the NBA's oldest player, had 16 points in 19 minutes, and Manu Ginobili also scored 16.

Duncan saw 15 minutes of action in Wednesday's win over the Los Angeles Clippers, scoring nine points. But the team said Friday that he had to strengthen his leg more before returning to the lineup.

Nuggets 117, Bucks 111

In Milwaukee, Rookie Carmelo Anthony scored 31 points and had a career-high nine assists as Denver tied a season-high in points with its win over Milwaukee.

Andre Miller had 23 points and Nene added 21 as the Nuggets scored 65 second-half points to win for only the third time in the past 12 games.

Milwaukee's Keith Van Horn scored 25 points, Desmond Mason had 22 and Michael Redd added 19.

Jazz 99, Suns 90

In Phoenix, Gordan Giricek scored a career-high 33 points as Utah beat Phoenix to continue its drive for a post-season berth.

The win kept the Jazz one-half game behind Denver for the eighth and final playoff spot in the Western Conference. Utah is trying to reach the postseason for the 21st consecutive year.

The loss was the 18th in the last 23 games for the Suns, the last-place team in the West.

Trail Blazers 83, Kings 81

In Portland, Oregon, Theo Ratliff had 11 points, 11 rebounds and eight blocked shots as Portland beat Sacramento for its second straight victory after losing five of their previous six.

Portland, trying to extend its streak of 21 consecutive playoff appearances, remained two games behind eighth-place Denver.

Damon Stoudamire had 20 points and Zach Randolph added 17 points and 14 rebounds.

Doug Christie missed a 3-point attempt as time ran out.

Cowboys get QB Henson for 3rd-round pick

By **MARK BABINECK**
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER



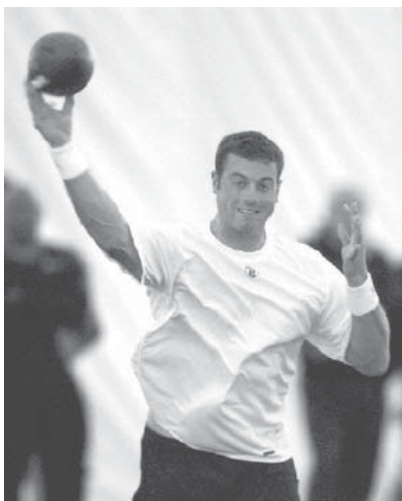
HOUSTON (AP)—Quarterback Drew Henson will get his chance to play in the NFL with the Dallas Cowboys.

Dallas acquired Henson from the Houston Texans on Friday for a third-round pick in the 2005 draft. Henson then agreed to an eight-year deal with the Cowboys, his agent, Tom Condon said.

Henson was selected in the sixth round by the Texans in last year's draft. Houston, which already has David Carr at quarterback, planned all along to deal the former Michigan starter who spent three full-time seasons playing baseball in the New York Yankees' organization.

Three other teams expressed serious interest in Henson: Cleveland, St. Louis and Buffalo. Henson, 24, worked out for 20 teams in Houston earlier this offseason.

On Thursday, Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said he was intrigued by Henson, who worked out for Dallas on March



Former Michigan quarterback Drew Henson throws during a workout for representatives from NFL teams Thursday, Feb. 12, 2004, at the Houston Texans training facility in Houston.

1. And on Friday, Jones worked out an eight-year deal, with the final four years voidable.

Henson will get a guaranteed \$3.5 million, the most ever for a sixth-round pick. He'll earn the minimum rookie salary of \$228,000 this season, but with

attainable incentives he can easily increase his earnings over the length of the deal.

Neither team would comment on the deal Friday. Paperwork on the contract was expected to be complete some time next week.

The Texans used the first of their two sixth-round picks last year on Henson, betting he would have another disappointing season in the Yankees' farm system and would decide to give up the \$12 million remaining on his baseball deal and return to football.

General manager Charley Casserly's gambit paid off in early February when Henson did just that. The Cowboys were among 20 teams who sent representatives to Houston on Feb. 12 to watch an open workout in the Texans' practice bubble, with assistant head coach Sean Payton leading a three-man contingent.

Henson had one stellar season at Michigan in 2000 and was projected to be a top draft pick in 2002 if he had another good year with the Wolverines. Instead, he signed with the Yankees as their third baseman of the future and left school.

No. 2 Stanford tops Oregon, 70-63



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Stanford barely escaped against Oregon again. Now the Cardinal goes for its first-ever Pac-10 tournament championship.

If that happens, the second-ranked Cardinal will get a top seed in their 10th consecutive NCAA tournament appearance.

Josh Childress scored 18 points and Stanford pulled away in the final 2 1/2 minutes for a 70-63 victory in the semifinals Friday night.

The Cardinal (28-1) will play either third-seeded Arizona or second-seeded Washington in Saturday's championship game. The winner earns an automatic berth to the NCAA tournament.

The fifth-seeded Ducks (15-12) have lost five of their last eight games and are likely headed to the NIT a year after winning the Pac-10 tournament title.

Stanford blew an eight-point lead with 7 1/2 minutes remaining. The Ducks ran off nine straight points for a 56-55 lead. Luke Jackson scored four points

and James Davis added a 3-pointer as part of the spurt.

But then Rob Little took over for the Cardinal, scoring six in a row for a 61-59 lead with 3:23 to play. Oregon managed a tie at 61-all on an inside basket by Mitch Platt off Jackson's assist.

Then Matt Lottich blocked Jackson's 3-point attempt. Lottich got the ball for a fast break layup and was fouled in the process. He made the free throw to complete the three-point play and give Stanford a 64-61 lead with 2:19 remaining.

The Cardinal scored the next four points to put the game away on a jump hook by Joe Kirchofer and two free throws from Childress.


In January, the Cardinal trailed by 19 points—their biggest deficit this season—in Eugene, Ore., before pulling out an 83-80 victory. They later completed a sweep of the Ducks.

Andre Joseph led the Ducks with 16 points. Jackson was held to 12 points—9 1/2 below his average.

Lottich added 15 points and Little 13 for Stanford.

Pettersson leads Honda Classic by 3 shots

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP GOLF WRITER

 **P A L M BEACHGARDENS, Fla.** (AP)—Carl Pettersson might not be a “mystery Swede” much longer.

Unknown even by the Swedish Golf Federation until a few

years ago, Pettersson continued to make it look easy at Mirasol on Friday with a 4-under 68 that gave him a three-shot lead, the largest 36-hole margin on tour this year.

“I’ve never had a 36-hole lead,” Pettersson said. “We’ll see what happens.”

He was at 13-under 131, three shots ahead of Brad Faxon and

Todd Hamilton, who each shot 66.

Fredrik Jacobson of Sweden had a 69 and was at 8-under 136, while the large contingent at 138 included Davis Love III, Fred Couples and Jesper Parnevik, the PGA Tour’s most famous Swedish player.

“He’s one of those mystery Swedes,” Parnevik said. “Even the Swedish golfers didn’t have



Carl Pettersson of Sweden acknowledges the crowd as he walks away from the 18th hole Thursday March 11, 2004, in the first round of the Honda Classic in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

AP

a clue he was from Sweden for a while.”

Pettersson moved to England when he was 10, then to North Carolina five years ago when his father was transferred to the United States while working for Volvo.

The head of the Swedish Golf Federation noticed his name among the college rankings in 2000. He called Pettersson with two important questions: Was he really from Sweden? And would he represent the homeland as an amateur?

Pettersson won the European Amateur in Austria, and he played on the Swedish team that finished fourth in the World Team Amateur.

Since leaving North Carolina State, he hasn’t made any headlines except for sharing the first-round lead at Muirfield in the 2002 British Open, and finishing second by four shots to Tiger Woods at Torrey Pines last year.

Now he has a chance to make a name for himself.

“It all depends on the weekend,” Pettersson said.

He will play the Sunrise course Saturday with Faxon, who was exceptional as ever with his putter. Faxon had five birdies in a seven-hole stretch—one of them after a fortunate bounce off a trash can—and

saved par on four of his final five holes in making a 36-hole cut for the first time this year.

Faxon tore ligaments in his right knee over Thanksgiving, decided not to have surgery and is slowly putting his game together.

“The last two weeks there’s been some good progress in my knee,” Faxon said.

Hamilton was an All-American on Oklahoma’s golf team, but that was back when Barry Switzer was the football coach. He has spent most of his 17-year career in Asia and finally got through Q-school last year. That makes him a 38-year-old rookie on the PGA Tour, and another guy who would love to make a name for himself at Mirasol.

The only difficulty Pettersson has faced this week is how to pronounce his name.

He was called “PET-er-son” when he was in contention at Muirfield two years ago. But having spent the last 11 years in the United States, and married a girl from North Carolina, he decided to go with “Peterson.”

Parnevik takes it one step farther, referring to him as “the only redneck Swede on the planet.”

For two days on the Sunrise course at Mirasol, he’s simply been the best golfer.

Pettersson opened with a 63, although Faxon and Hamilton

each surpassed him on the leaderboard by the time the Swede teed off in the afternoon.

He hit a 6-iron into 12 feet for birdie on the par-3 11th (his second hole), and got away with a slight miss on the difficult 14th. Pettersson was trying to land his 7-iron from 181 yards some 15 feet right of the hole, pulled it slightly and came within inches of holing out for eagle.

His lone bogey came from a fairway bunker on No. 2, but he atoned for that by smashing a 3-wood from the left rough to the front of the green on the par-5 fifth, two-putting from nearly 100 feet for birdie.

Pettersson still has his work cut out for him.

While Mirasol has been kind and gentle, all it takes is a little wind to make the elevated, heavily contoured greens to turn even the good shots into a potential disaster.

The cut, which was a record 6 under last year at the Sunset course, was even par.

Greg Norman, making his 2004 debut, looked like he might make the cut until he hit a provisional ball on the 13th hole fearing his tee shot was in the hazard. Players are not allowed to hit provisional shots unless the ball is believed to be lost or out of bounds, and Norman wound up disqualifying himself.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New Jersey	40	24	.625	—
Miami	29	37	.439	12
New York	29	37	.439	12
Boston	29	38	.433	12 1/2
Philadelphia	28	38	.424	13
Washington	20	44	.313	20
Orlando	19	48	.284	22 1/2

Central Division

x-Indiana	49	16	.754	—
Detroit	42	25	.627	8
Milwaukee	34	31	.523	15
New Orleans	34	31	.523	15
Cleveland	29	36	.446	20
Toronto	27	38	.415	22
Atlanta	21	44	.323	28
Chicago	18	47	.277	31

Western Conference

Midwest Division

Minnesota	46	20	.697	—
San Antonio	44	22	.667	2
Memphis	41	24	.631	4 1/2
Dallas	40	24	.625	5
Houston	38	26	.594	7
Denver	35	32	.522	11 1/2
Utah	34	32	.515	12

Pacific Division

Sacramento	48	17	.738	—
L.A. Lakers	42	23	.646	6
Portland	32	33	.492	16
Seattle	27	38	.415	21
L.A. Clippers	26	39	.400	22
Golden State	25	39	.391	22 1/2
Phoenix	21	44	.323	27

x-clinched playoff spot

Yesterday’s Games

Philadelphia 99, New York 94, 2OT
Indiana 99, Boston 81
Atlanta 138, Washington 124
Miami 82, Seattle 74
New Jersey 88, Chicago 76
Memphis 98, L.A. Clippers 89
Minnesota 96, L.A. Lakers 86
Denver 117, Milwaukee 111
San Antonio 99, Golden State 74
Utah 99, Phoenix 90
Portland 83, Sacramento 81

MEN’S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Atlantic 10 Conference Semifinals

Dayton 58, Richmond 56
Xavier 70, George Washington 47

Atlantic Coast Conference Quarterfinals

Duke 84, Virginia 74
Georgia Tech 83, North Carolina 82
Maryland 87, Wake Forest 86
N.C. State 78, Florida St. 71

Big 12 Conference Quarterfinals

Kansas 94, Missouri 69
Oklahoma St. 83, Iowa St. 75
Texas 66, Oklahoma 63
Texas Tech 79, Colorado 69

Big East Conference Semifinals

Connecticut 84, Villanova 67
Pittsburgh 62, Boston College 53

Big Ten Conference Quarterfinals

Illinois 71, Indiana 59
Michigan 79, Iowa 70
Michigan St. 68, Northwestern 55
Wisconsin 66, Minnesota 52

Big West Conference Semifinals

CS Northridge 63, Utah St. 62
Pacific 67, Idaho 61

Conference USA Semifinals

Cincinnati 66, Saint Louis 46
DePaul 75, UAB 74, OT

Mid-American Conference Semifinals

Kent St. 66, Miami (Ohio) 56
W. Michigan 87, Toledo 77

Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference Semifinals

Coppin St. 55, Delaware St. 52
Florida A&M 65, S. Carolina St. 53

Mountain West Conference Semifinals

Utah 54, BYU 51

NAIA Div. II Tournament Second Round

Bellevue 78, Siena Heights 75, OT
Cedarville 98, Cornerstone 77
Daemen 76, Albertain 71
Mid-Am Nazarene 69, Marian, Ind. 57
Oregon Tech 73, Jamestown 66
Sioux Falls 78, Flagler 67
St. Ambrose 86, St. Vincent 80
William Jewell 74, Huntington (Ind.) 69

NCAA Div. III Tournament Third Round

Amherst 92, N.J. City 74
Franklin & Marshall 92, Gwynedd-Mercy 74
John Carroll 76, Maryville, Tenn. 74
Keene St. 82, Rochester 79
Lawrence 86, Sul Ross St. 79, OT
Williams 78, Brockport St. 50
Wis.-Stevens Pt. 100, Puget Sound 79
Wooster 58, Illinois Wesleyan 53

NCAA Division II Tournament First Round

Alaska-Fairbanks 91, CS Bakersfield 82
BYU-Hawaii 67, Alaska-Anchorage 61
CS San Bernardino 92, CSU-Chico 60
Humboldt St. 86, Cal Poly-Pomona 83

Pac-10 Conference Semifinals

Stanford 70, Oregon 63
Washington 90, Arizona 85

Southeastern Conference Quarterfinals

Florida 75, Alabama 73, OT
Kentucky 69, Georgia 60
South Carolina 85, LSU 64
Vanderbilt 74, Mississippi St. 70, OT

Southland Conference Championship

Texas-San Antonio 74, Stephen F.Austin 70

Southwestern Conference Semifinals

Alabama A&M 83, Alcorn St. 81
Alabama St. 59, Jackson St. 56, 2OT

Western Athletic Conference Semifinals

Nevada 67, Rice 59
UTEP 85, Boise St. 73

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS

MLB

NEW YORK YANKEES-Optioned RHP Bret Prinz to Columbus of the IL.
SEATTLE MARINERS-Optioned C Ryan Christianson to Tacoma of the PCL. Re-assigned LHP Craig Anderson, OF Shin

Soo Choo, INF Adam Jones, LHP Jose Nunez and INF A.J. Zapp to their minor league camp.

PITTSBURGH PIRATES-Assigned C Ronny Paulino, RHP Chris Fussell and LHP Paul Maholm to their minor league camp. Assigned RHP Bobby Bradley and C Ryan Doumit to Altoona of the EL. Assigned LHP Cory Stewart to Nashville of the PCL.

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS-Assigned RHP Matt Duff, LHP Randy Flores, LHP Joe Horgan, RHP Tyler Johnson, RHP Allen Levrault, RHP Spike Lundberg, RHP Chad Paronto, LHP Jason Pearson and INF Scott Seabolt to Memphis of the PCL. Assigned C Dan Moylan and C Gabe Johnson to Tennessee of the Southern League. Assigned C Matt Pagnozzi to New Jersey of the New York-Penn League.

NBA

LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS-Placed G Marko Jaric on the injured list. Activated G Doug Overton from the injured list.
LOS ANGELES LAKERS-Placed F Brian Cook on the injured list. Activated F Karl Malone from the injured list.
NEW YORK KNICKS-Signed C Vin Baker for the remainder of the season. Placed C Cezary Trybanski and G Frank Williams on the injured list. Activated G Moochie Norris from the injured list.
ORLANDO MAGIC-Demoted general manager John Gabriel to team adviser and regional scout. Named chief operating officer John Weisbrod, general manager.

PHILADELPHIA 76ERS-Placed F Glenn Robinson and F Amal McCaskill on the injured list. Activated F Derrick Coleman and F Marc Jackson from the injured list.
TORONTO RAPTORS-Signed F Corie Blount. Waived F Michael Bradley. Placed G Milt Palacio on the injured list.
SACRAMENTO KINGS-Signed G Rodney Buford for the remainder of the season.

NFL

BALTIMORE RAVENS-Agreed to terms with QB Anthony Wright on a two-year contract and OL Orlando Brown on a five-year contract.
HOUSTON TEXANS-Signed LB Marcus Bell.
OAKLAND RAIDERS-Signed LB Danny Clark.
ST. LOUIS RAMS-Matched the Washington offer for CB Jerametrius Butler and the Carolina offer for TE Brandon Manumaleuna.
WASHINGTON REDSKINS-Re-signed S Todd Franz and LB Lemar Marshall.

College

FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON-Named Kristin Crocitto women’s interim tennis coach.
GRAND VALLEY STATE-Named Steve Brockelbank offensive line coach, Matt Mitchell linebackers coach and Matt Middletown wide receivers coach.
KALAMAZOO-Announced the resignation of Matt Kellogg, women’s soccer coach.
SAINT MICHAEL’S-Promoted Zafir Bludevich to senior associate athletic director and Christopher Kenny to associate athletic director.
UC SAN DIEGO-Declined to renew contract of Greg Lanthier, men’s basketball coach. Named David Wahlstrom associate athletic director-sports information director.

By The Associated Press

The Week in Sports

Pumping up the volume at AMP



Jung Young Kim sprints toward the finish line during the Club Elan run. Kim bagged first place.



Yoshi Suzuki runs during the final leg of the Club Elan 5K Fun Run last Saturday evening at the American Memorial Park. Suzuki finished in second place.

The Tinian Mayor's Office paid for tennis players from the island to attend the US Tennis Association's Coaches Developmental Workshop held last Sunday at the AMP tennis courts. The players are Joe San Nicolas, Sonny Decena, Archie Monticello, Doy Ligan, and Edgar Carunan.



PHOTOS AND TEXT BY MARK RABAGO AND SHAN SEMAN, REPORTERS

Windsurfing fanatics, tennis enthusiasts and track and field aficionados flocked to the American Memorial Park to take part in exciting action on both land and on sea the past weekend.

Sunday evening saw the 22nd Micronesian Open crown Saipan's very own Harumitsu Ohno as champion of the men's open division. Ann Jordan of Saipan, who won the women's open, and Masahiro Tsuneoka of Japan, who topped the master's division, joined Ohno in the winners' circle.

The morning and afternoon before the windsurfing awards banquet, the Saipan Tennis Association hosted a coaches development workshop that was administered by USTA Hawaii

Recreational tennis Arnold Yuen at the AMP tennis courts. Over 60 participants graced the clinic.

The AMP pathway then hosted the Club Elan 5K Fun Run last March 6 with veteran roadrunners Jung Young Kim, Yoshi Suzuki, and Dirk Sharer taking the top 3 sports in the men's class. Miekoto Motoyoshi then finished in first place in the women's division.

A few kilometers down the road on Wednesday at the Saipan Bowling Center, Mark's Team won the overall championship of the Wednesday Night Mixed League.

Mark's Team, which was spearheaded by veteran kegler Mark "The Shark" Halstead and perfect game bowler Jonathan Hensley, turned back the challenge of D'Jokers and Mark Shark for the title.



Verizon's Richard Brostrom, right, and Tony Rahu of the Dyno-Sores go up for a jump ball at the start of their match last Saturday in the 40-and-over Masters Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



Members of the Hustlers walk towards the dugout.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Dane Lisua steals home for the Church's Chicken Bombers in last Sunday's Major Little League game against the Twins.



Exadine Udul of PIA attempts a shot against Mobil players Romolor Manalo, left, and Jojo Dadvias in their Mobil Co-ed game last Tuesday.



Japan's Masahiro Tsuneoka, second from right, won the master's division of the 22nd Micronesian Open held last weekend off Micro Beach.

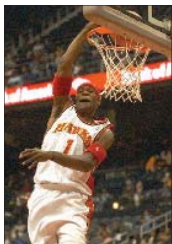


CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
William S. Reyes Elementary School students get a taste of playing tennis during a workshop administered by USTA Recreational Tennis director Arnold Yuen last Monday.



Arnold Yuen, middle, is flanked by STA officers, from left, Phil Calen, Roy Pangelinan, Ricky Castro, Nelia Luna, Delia and Ed Johnson during a workshop held at the Kagman Elementary School last Monday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Hawks' Jackson scores 42 points in win over Wizards

Stephen Jackson scored a career-high 42 points and five Atlanta players scored at least 20 in a 138-124 win over the Washington Wizards on Friday night.

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Pumping up the volume at AMP

Windsurfing fanatics, tennis enthusiasts and track and field aficionados flocked to the American Memorial Park to watch exciting action on both land and on sea the past weekend.

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Going back to school

By MARK RABAGO
REPORTER

Accountants, teachers, auto mechanics, dentists, security personnel, stay-home mothers and even retired employees saw themselves back in school last Sunday.

The subject: Learning how to become a tennis coach for aspiring netters on the island.

So it came to pass that 60 or so tennis players, with as various backgrounds as the racquets and tennis shoes they brought and wore, attended the coaches development workshop administered by USTA Hawaii Recreational Tennis director Arnold Yuen.

After the marathon 9am to 5pm workshop by Yuen, his new students went home with a greater appreciation of tennis and how to impart the knowledge to the younger tennis generation.

"It was a very entertaining, refreshing, and enjoyable way of learning tennis and picking up tips on transferring what we learned to beginners and first-time players," said Hafa Adai Beach Hotel's Marlon Estigoy.

Didith Julve, who works as a mechanic for an auto shop in Chalan Kanoa, echoed Estigoy's opinion.

"I had a lot of fun and also learned a lot of things from the workshop. Mr. Yuen gave us new ways of teaching tennis to new players," he said.

Country House's Ghay Paculanang, on the other hand, said that Mr. Yuen's workshop has given



Yuen and participants in the workshop gather for a group shot at the AMP tennis courts.



USTA Hawaii Recreational Tennis director Arnold Yuen manages a smile during a break.



local tennis associations a blueprint on how to conduct clinics for beginners.

"The workshop was a real eye opener for all of us," said Paculanang. "We never thought a clinic could be such fun and at the same time offer a lot of useful information. Now, all we need is to recreate it somehow for our own clinics."

For his part Elite Printing's Manny Jardinero feels that the tennis community on Saipan needs more tennis workshops administered by the USTA to come to the island.

"We were able to learn a lot from Mr. Yuen and I hope he comes back for more clinics in the near future," he said.

Roy Pangelinan, the president of the Saipan Tennis Association, which is the association responsible for inviting Yuen to Saipan, said that the workshop was a smashing success and thanked the USTA official for sharing his expertise.

"The reception was more than okay. A lot of tennis players were happy with what they learned and feel great to have attended the workshop. Arnold did us a big favor by coming here to Saipan and teaching us a number of techniques and motivational skills to improve coaching," he said.

The next day, a number of those who participated in the Sunday workshop literally had to go back to school when they accompanied Yuen in a tour of William S. Reyes Elementary School in Susupe, San Antonio Elementary School and Kagman Elementary School.

STA public information officer Ricky Castro said Yuen's workshops for the students were well received by both the teachers and their pupils.

"Since the schools didn't have tennis courts, Mr. Yuen had to use the basketball courts for demonstrations. The students experienced how to play on hard and grass surfaces and were given a feel of how to play the sport," he said.

In all, Yuen was able to teach more than 400 students from grades four to six in the Monday morning school-hopping clinic.



A portion of the more than 60 participants of the USTA coaches development workshop go through the drills.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS